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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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The Purpose of the War

Civilized opinion, both in the western Allies and in neutral nations, demands a fuller statement of the Allies' peace aims than has yet been made. The destruction of Hitlerism is not enough. What does that mean, and what is to follow it? By offering peace on the basis of the status quo, Hitler has mobilized German opinion to support him in further prosecution of the war. Soviet spokesmen have been enabled to back him by accusing the democracies of fighting for imperialist purposes.

We hear rumors that the British and French governments have been consulting with a view to another statement on the subject. There is a strong movement in France, as there was in the last war, to remove the menace by "pulverizing" Germany in order to render it impossible for her to fight again. Certainly the Germans will never desert Hitler if they think that is going to be their fate. While British Tories are likely to be more wise in this respect, there is wide distrust of their other purposes. Again we must ask Chamberlain and Daladier, "What are you fighting for?"

Italy Shifts Her Orbit

There is no longer any doubt that important changes have taken place in Italy's foreign policy. Although the fascist press insists that the recent shakeup in the Cabinet was only a routine matter, everyone knows that this is not true. All the men who were notoriously pro-German have been replaced by men conspicuously lacking in that orientation. Moreover, Italy and Greece have indicated a desire for closer relations, and Greece is tied both to Turkey and Great Britain. The British admit an increased friendliness for Italy by giving de-facto recognition to the seizure of Albania.

In part, Italy's attitude is an aftermath of the Russo-German understanding. Mussolini did not like it, and the Catholic Church, with which he is now on friendly terms, regards Russia as the world center of atheism. More important, however, are conflicting ambitions in the Balkans. Italy has always hoped to create a bloc in Southeastern Europe under her dominance. This is incompatible with the present ambitions of Germany and Russia, whether these two powers are collaborating or, as seems more probable, competing in that region. No doubt it is premature to say that Italy is now pro-Ally; but it is not premature to say she is moving in that direction and might easily repeat what she did in the World War of 1914. What we do know is that she will serve her imperialist aims, no matter where they eventually lead her.

Now It Can Be Told

Great Britain has published a White Paper describing the mistreatment of Jewish and other prisoners in German concentration camps. What it says is so terrible that sensitive people can hardly endure to read it; yet what we have heard before suggests that it is all true, unlike most of the British propaganda about German frightfulness during the last war. An interesting point

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is that this White Paper consists of reports from British diplomats in Germany, accumulated over a long period of time. London knew all about these dreadful stories when Chamberlain sat down with Hitler at Munich and came back wreathed in smiles, and when the British ambassador hobnobbed with Goering, and British financiers tried, this summer, to float a huge loan to help Germany get on her feet. The White Paper is published now only because the two countries are at war and it makes good propaganda. Diplomats have strong stomachs.

Misery Wholesale

One thing this war has managed to do is to create an unparalleled amount of human misery in Europe. Reports are strictly censored, but apparently Hitler intends to dump all the Jews in Germany into a reservation to be created somewhere in what was formerly Poland. It is said that all the able-bodied Austrian male Jews have already been sent to Poland for forced labor under what are practically concentration-camp conditions. As for the Polish Jews themselves, whom the Germans regard as a particularly low variety, the dispatches calmly state that it is the intention to let about 1,500,000 of them starve to death. Circumstantial reports from many Polish towns and villages indicate that numbers have been executed, apparently at random and for the terrorization such tactics create.

There are several hundred thousand Jews and Poles now in Rumania, who escaped across the border in the last days of Polish resistance. That they are without adequate food, clothing or shelter goes without saying. These Jews are particularly unlucky, since Rumania is only a shade less anti-Semitic than Germany.

From that part of Poland now in Russian hands a little news leaks out, of the arrest of Socialists, trade-union leaders, conservative politicians, of the shooting of landlords and so on. No doubt many of these individuals had behaved badly from Russia's point of view, but it is just as painful to you and your family to be shot if you deserve it as if you don't. Even the people who are now being uprooted and transferred wholesale, the Germans from the Baltic States and Russia, the Ukrainians from what was western Poland, must in many cases be acutely miserable. In the modern world mass-production technique has been applied to many things and most of all to human misery.

Plan Neutrality!

Now that the arms embargo is repealed, the papers are full of accounts of British and French military purchases in this country—mostly airplanes. Not so prominent is the news of decline in customary orders for other products. There is a good deal of uncertainty about how much cash purchasing power the Allies will have here anyway; according to T. R. B. in this issue, certain experts believe it to be unexpectedly large. On the other hand, a story is printed in The Week, a London confidential letter that is often but not always right, to the effect that the British and French governments plan to exhaust their cash here quickly, and then to induce us to extend credit with the plea that if we don't, our sudden prosperity will flop. The New Republic does not believe that war orders will provide much net industrial expansion for a long time to come.

Now is the time for our government to mobilize the necessary data and prepare to act upon them. We need advance information, not only on munitions orders, but on all British and French trade. We need to guard against false expectations of a boom. But if a boom is in sight, we shall have to prepare to dampen it down. We shall also have to take care about the prices of things we need from abroad, such as rubber and wool. Some sort of control of foreign-security sales is essential, not only to prevent rigging of the market, but to keep total exports somewhere near a normal level. What is to be done to prevent the hangover of rapidly expanded war industries? What for the industries that will suffer from restriction of demand or supply? Neutrality planning is the next requirement—if we want to remain neutral and normally prosperous.

The Propaganda Didn't Work

When Congress met to consider the repeal of the arms embargo, all records for mass propaganda action were broken. In a period of only about a week, nearly a million letters and telegrams were sent, many inspired by Father Coughlin, W. R. Hearst and similar sources including, no doubt, Nazi Germany. In addition, scores of people went to Washington to urge their views in person. Nearly all this activity, especially at the beginning, was against the repeal of the embargo. Yet when final action was taken, the Senate lined up just about as had been predicted weeks before it assembled, and the vote in the House in favor of repeal was even larger than had been expected. (Perhaps Molotov's speech scolding the United States helped to increase the victory in the House.) All the fine arts of propaganda were turned on with maximum pressure, and they seemingly had no result at all. We take that back; we had for the moment forgotten the supertechnique of British propaganda in saying absolutely nothing. Perhaps we need to revise our thinking about the effectiveness of mass pressure as exerted by mail, telegraph and public meeting.

The New Communist Line

The new line of the Comintern is now established—by a speech delivered in Moscow on November 3 by General Secretary Dimitrov, promptly echoed in a speech in Boston on November 5 by Earl Browder. It marks a thoroughgoing return to the pre-popular-front revolutionary doctrine. The war is an imperialist one; the United States is being impelled toward partici-

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pation in it by profiteers; the workers of the world will revolt against the slaughter and establish socialism. This line enables its proponents to say much that is true. Revolution is the expected sequel of a long world war. But Mr. Browder's speech will not evoke the response that it might have evoked a year or two ago, for several very good reasons. People all over the world have awakened to the fact that any policy of the several national Communist Parties is dictated by the necessities of the Soviet government. The masses are distrustful of the sincerity and continuity of this policy; it may again be changed overnight if the Kremlin makes another shift. And they are not at all sure that they want the same kind of government that the USSR now has. They may have revolution, but are not so likely to accept Communist leadership in it. Since the new policy involves a resignation from the popular front, with all that this implies—including attacks by Communists on all progressive and labor bodies not under their control—it will effectively isolate the party.

Mr. Willkie on Mr. Dies

Wendell Willkie, president of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, is a highly conservative business man. It is significant when a person in his position finds occasion to criticize publicly the operations of the Dies Committee on the ground that it is destroying reputations by "publicity, by inference and by innuendo," and says that it is "undermining the democratic process." He criticized the fact that "men can be put on the witness stand without protection of counsel and without any adequate opportunity to answer." Although in his speech before the Columbia College Alumni in New York City he did not mention the Dies Committee by name, he readily admitted afterwards that it was this group he had in mind. Mr. Willkie hinted that his criticism could be applied to other congressional committees as well, but this is not true of many with whose work we are familiar. The La Follette Committee, for example, was scrupulously careful about its witnesses, and its revelations have stood the test of time. Despite this disagreement, we are glad to see Mr. Willkie concurring in a criticism of the Dies Committee that we have repeatedly made.

The Meaning of Ham-and-Eggs

In the week's elections throughout the nation there were two points of major interest. Both California and Ohio voted on old-age-pension plans providing large payments (by present standards) to elderly persons. In both states, a tremendous vote in favor of the proposal was predicted, in spite of the disastrous experiences of Texas and Colorado in attempting to live up to pension promises made during election campaigns. The significant fact is that millions of people can so readily be assembled in support of weird and complicated plans for old-age security. It is no use merely to say that these people are the victims of demagogues: the important thing is the state of mind that makes them such easy prey for the glib promisers. Until we have faced and solved the problem of insecurity in this country, we may expect a succession of Ham-and-Eggs movements, cropping up everywhere and invariably attracting enormous support in a short time.

Aftermath of an Election

The overturn in Quebec makes possible once more negotiations between the United States and Canada over the vast St. Lawrence project, which would both provide a channel for ocean-going ships and make available huge new amounts of hydroelectric power. Ontario and Quebec had opposed the project for various reasons. Premier Hepburn of Ontario withdrew his opposition recently and the new Liberal government of Quebec will probably do the same, since the war makes urgent the need for additional electric power. Canada will make some stipulations, including one for diversion of some water from the Albany River basin into the Great Lakes, but it is believed that these will not prove an insuperable obstacle. The door is now open for a project that will dictate profound alterations in the economic geography of both the United States and Canada.

News Notes of a Week

Charging that Germany had deliberately violated Norwegian territorial waters and neutrality, authorities at Haugesund interned the German prize crew of the "City of Flint" and turned her over to her American crew. . . . Except for artillery exchanges along the Forbach salient, all was still quiet on the western front. . . . In Berlin rumors increased that the ending of the American arms embargo would be answered by a German military offensive. . . . That Japan might be preparing to slam the Open Door tight shut was indicated by her assertions that she planned to pursue her present course in China in spite of threats of economic pressure from the United States.

Repeal of the arms embargo promised European war orders totaling an estimated billion dollars within the next few weeks. Meanwhile the barring of United States nationals and shipping from combat areas presaged a breakdown of American merchant shipping in the North Atlantic. From five to ten thousand seamen will be forced to go "on the beach," with no plan so far put forward to take care of them. . . . A strike was called by the International Longshoremen's Union in the port of New York against nine coastal steamship lines when the companies rejected a demand for wage increases and a forty-hour week. . . . Charging that its "secret" purpose was the promotion of a third term for Roosevelt, John L. Lewis made public his opposition to the Conference of Western Progressives. . . . William C. McCuistion was jailed for hearing on a

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New Orleans murder charge, after his allegations of communism in the National Maritime Union, made to the Dies Committee, had been read into the record and front-paged across the nation. Chairman Dies announced that he would ask the House for $100,000 to finance the continuance of his committee for another year and promised to resume hearings in three weeks with an investigation of "communism in the schools," starting, we hope, in the kindergarten and working down.

Common Sense About Russia

THERE ARE FEW WRITERS on international affairs whose views will command more respect among those of progressive leanings than Vincent Sheean. Readers of his books and articles know that he knows his Europe and—before 1927—knew his Russia at first hand. They also have learned to rely on his warm feeling for the plain people of the world, and especially for those engaged in building better things for the future, or in resisting oppression. He has never been above the battle. In Spain, for instance, he was not just a reporter. He also worked hard and long, as did so many other Americans of good will, to arouse the public to the meaning of the Loyalist cause, to expose the lies which sought to blacken it, to succor the victims of the defeat.

When Mr. Sheean decides to testify against the Soviet Union, as he has in the two articles written for The New Republic, his testimony therefore cannot be discounted as was that of some of the others who have done so in the past. He does not harbor a congenital hostility to the Russian experiment, concealed beneath a veneer which is rubbed off by the first experience of discomfort. He cannot be accused of personal grudges. He is not a captious critic, or an unreliable factionalist always shifting loyalties. He can see beneath surfaces and is not put off by superficial disappointments. He would never have become disillusioned because the Bolsheviks did not create Utopia overnight or were slow and clumsy in solving their enormous difficulties.

Nevertheless we sense what seems to us a certain lack of realism in his point of view, which is shared by many. His articles make it clear that his adverse judgment was precipitated by the action of the Soviet government in the war crisis. This action was so contrary to previous Communist professions, and was so shocking to those who had been girding themselves for the fight against Hitlerism as the most hateful phenomenon in the modern world, that it created a revolution in emotional attitudes. In none does this revolution strike deeper than in those who have made their own the international aims to which they thought the Soviet Union was pledged. The firmer their devotion to these aims, the more profound is their revulsion at what they feel is a betrayal. And, since the Soviet government could act in this way abroad, every doubt about its internal policy is resolved against it. At last the hypocrite is disclosed for what he is. The alternative to this revulsion is a sort of blind religious faith, trusting in a divine wisdom that it cannot understand.

There has long been a tendency among intellectuals to be either "for" or "against" the Soviet Union; to demand that it be regarded either as all white or all black. Any attempt at a really critical view was branded as lack of clarity or "liberal confusion." Those who, like The New Republic, saw some good things and some bad were condemned as Stalinists whenever they expressed a favorable judgment, and as Trotskyists or bourgeois reactionaries whenever they expressed an unfavorable one. This tendency is now intensified. Things are seen, in this excitement of war, more than ever disguised under labels and categories, and the chief preoccupation of many is now to pass a final moral judgment upon Soviet communism. This is only natural, since communism offered itself as the one true way of social salvation, permitting no deviation or dissent. And, as Mr. Sheean points out, it was the last resort of those who had been balked and disillusioned by other systems.

To us, however, it seems that partisanship of this kind makes it impossible to understand what has happened. One is not so bitterly disillusioned about Soviet foreign policy, for instance, if one never accepted the drive for "collective security" as an article of faith, but rather saw in it a device of Moscow's foreign policy. The New Republic is in this position, because it opposed collective security as a policy for this country and was always extremely dubious about its success in Europe.

When Litvinov's line was adopted by the Soviet Foreign Office, it was as sharp a break with the past and as much a contradiction of former Bolshevik theory as the later shift from collective security to the friendship with Hitler. Leading Communists had never trusted capitalist nations to keep their promises and had always expected another imperialist war. They thought the League of Nations was a joke. Their main concern was to preserve the Soviet Union against attack, and, doubtless, to profit from the quarrels of others. These opinions were not changed when the USSR joined the League and Litvinov began his skillful campaign for resistance to aggressors. When at the same time the Comintern took its new line of coöperating with democratic forces in other countries to oppose Fascist aggression, it acted mainly as an adjunct to the diplomatic maneuver.

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The secret of the whole business was that the Soviet Union feared an attack by Hitler, probably with the aid of Italy and Japan, possibly also with the backing of Britain and France. If it could convince the western powers that Hitler was the chief enemy it could split its opponents and deflect the aggression. Collective security through the League was the obvious weapon for the purpose. If it could be put across, Hitler's attack might be prevented entirely, but if Hitler did attack, the Soviet Union would have allies. It was a good, hard-headed piece of *Realpolitik*, comparable with the strategy of any other European foreign office. The ideological mumbo-jumbo in which it was clothed was an instance of the thoroughness with which the Soviet forces follow through any line adopted. The propaganda carried masses of people along with it, including many devout Communists, but it was sunk without a trace when Stalin decided that collective security would not work.

And he had good reasons for deciding this, as everyone will now admit. The marvel is that he flogged the dead horse for so long. There was never any chance that the United States would join the parade. Collective security suffered an uninterrupted series of defeats —in Ethiopia, in Austria, in Spain. Munich gave it the final blow. After that, what reason had the Kremlin to believe that the policy was serviceable any more? Britain and France seemed to have no will to resist; they had furthermore deprived themselves of enormous strategical advantages. It was plain enough that the leading powers in both western democracies were more afraid of Stalin than of Hitler. Even after their change of front, their attempt to win Moscow into an alliance was a half-hearted one. The blunders of Baldwin, Chamberlain and Daladier virtually forced Stalin into isolation.

And there he was, back where he started. The time-honored tactic of any politician is, if he cannot make a good deal with one side, to make it with the other. No dependable allies would safeguard the Soviet Union against attack, and so, he thought, it must fortify itself. In a series of brilliant strokes, Stalin utilized Hitler's plight to entrench himself in Poland, in the Baltic, in the Balkans. Military motives ruled, regardless of concern for other peoples. The defense of Leningrad and of the Ukraine was immensely strengthened. The Comintern has done its part, by retreating from the popular front and dropping anti-fascism, to return to the old anti-imperialist-war revolutionary position.

It is only when one looks at these moves through an ideological fog that they are hard to understand. The Soviet Foreign Office is no more altruistic than those in London, Paris, Berlin and Rome. But also it is no more villainous. We do not believe that Stalin has started out on a Napoleonic career of conquest. The dangers of war are too great on the home front, as he must well know. It is, of course, conceivable that he would make this mistake; anything is conceivable in this crazy world. But the Soviet economy does not require additional territory except for defense of weak boundaries, and the time for military assistance to world revolution has not arrived. What is going on now is pressure discreetly applied where it can produce immediate results, and diplomatic intrigue of the old familiar kind.

At home, the Stalin dictatorship has mowed down a succession of enemies and potential enemies, together with many innocent persons, by the old conspiratorial technique of espionage and terrorism. It had been the hope of those who saw some good in the Russian Revolution that this ugly repression would gradually die out, and be replaced by a political system more in consonance with socialist ideals. There were times when this seemed to be occurring. At any rate, the terror affected for a long time mainly those prominent in politics, leaving the great body of the people untouched except by the general censorship of ideas and the tutelage of the monolithic political system.

Old Bolsheviks might be liquidated, but industries were growing, labor had shorter hours and higher wages, the standard of living was slowly rising, social services spread, popular education was established. The many volumes recording careful observation of revolutionary improvements in Russia cannot be thrown away on account of the recent events. The last purges, however, beginning after the assassination of Kirov, seem to have reached so far down as to have pretty thoroughly disorganized the management of Soviet economy. So good a correspondent as G. E. R. Gedye of The New York Times describes a difficulty in obtaining ordinary articles of clothing in Moscow which indicates a great deterioration since 1935 and 1936. Apparently the effort of Stalin to keep himself in power by terroristic methods, killing off or removing or frightening whole ranks of people who had developed ability to do things, has seriously inhibited the advance of Soviet society. Nevertheless it seems extreme to say, as Mr. Sheean does, that "the workers have lost every liberty hitherto known to man," or that "the prison and the knout are installed in factory and collective farm," or that surplus value "has been brutally augmented by all the capitalist devices hitherto discovered, applied with ruthless force to a helpless proletariat, and expropriated" for the use of a new class of expropriators. If anything like this is true, then the Soviet state must be so weak internally as not to inspire fear in anyone. It certainly could not endure a war.

There are doubtless Red devils and Red angels, but on the average Communists are simply human beings who should be judged and dealt with as such. We must look beyond their words to their intentions, just as we do with other politicians. Wide-eyed simple faith will not do. We must recognize, too, that Communists in

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this country dance to the tune Moscow plays, no matter how honest they may be as individuals. That does not mean they ought to be outlawed or persecuted; political terror is just what we dislike most in Russia. But Moscow is not playing our tune; it is playing its own, as any but a fanatic would expect it to do. It does not and has not for a long time sincerely represented any genuine international movement, and it is not a secure repository of the trust of workers or intellectuals in other nations, any more than is London or Paris or Berlin. Yet there are institutions and ideas everywhere in the world that are worthy of respect; there are persons in more than one country who can cooperate as free and independent human beings. The tract for the times is merely that the ambitious attempt of the Comintern to create a monopoly of these precious values has gone bankrupt.

Lindbergh and the Nazis

When Dorothy Thompson recently said she detected elements of Nazi philosophy in the radio speeches by Colonel Lindbergh, many of her readers no doubt felt that she was overstating her point in the heat of debate. Yet the Colonel's article in the November issue of The Reader's Digest makes one wonder whether Miss Thompson was very far wrong.

Under the title "Aviation, Geography and Race," Colonel Lindbergh publishes an extraordinary document which is not less important because it is so vague. In a soft and prettified style of writing, which sounds completely out of character for the Flying Colonel, he talks about the "Western nations" which are threatened by "the teeming millions of Asia" and "a pressing sea of Yellow, Black and Brown." He wants us to "guard our heritage from Mongol and Persian and Moor" and talks about "a Western Wall of race and arms which can hold back either a Genghis Khan or the infiltration of inferior blood." He comes a little nearer to what he is hinting at when he speaks of "an English fleet, a German air force, a French army, an American nation, standing together as guardians of our common heritage, sharing strength, dividing influence." At another point he talks approvingly of "those Western nations who were already the leaders of their era" and for whom "aviation seems almost a gift from heaven . . . strengthening their leadership, their confidence, their dominance over other peoples."

Aviation is a divine gift for the reason that "It is a tool specially shaped for Western hands, a scientific art which others only copy in a mediocre fashion." Yet the Colonel is worried—worried about "a people too far separated from the soil and from the sea," about "that physical decline which so often goes with a high intellectual development, that spiritual decline which seems invariably to accompany an industrial life, that racial decline which follows mental and spiritual mediocrity." He is afraid of war because "the White race is bound to lose and the others bound to gain." "We can have peace and security only so long as we band together to preserve that most priceless possession, our inheritance of European blood, only so long as we guard ourselves against attack by foreign armies and dilution by foreign races."

In so far as we understand Colonel Lindbergh, everything he says is false. It is not true, on the facts of the record, that "the Yellow, Black and Brown" have constituted a pressing sea. This statement is pretty funny, with practically all of Africa and about half of Asia dominated by empires of the white man. It is not true that the white race is mentally, morally and physically superior to every other; the best thought of the leading anthropologists is that there are no inferior or superior races, apart from environmental factors. Talk about "the infiltration of inferior blood" and "dilution by foreign races" is just Nazi nonsense. There is no evidence that only white men are capable of building or flying good airplanes. The Colonel's sentence about "an English fleet, a German air force, a French army, an American nation, standing together," if it means anything at all, means that he wants these four powers to stand together in fighting some mysterious unnamed foe, presumably Soviet Russia. Internal evidence suggests that this article was written before the war began; if it came, however indirectly, from Nazi inspiration, Hitler has now changed his tune and would like to withdraw that part of the argument. On the whole, we prefer to think that this extraordinary outburst is only the confused and misguided thinking of a young man who has never had any aptitude for public affairs and should never have been forced into a position where he felt he must participate in them.

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Behind Molotov's Speech

WHEN HOSTILITIES began, Germany appeared to have many allies. France and England seemed isolated but were determined to maintain their engagements, however unfavorable conditions might be.

Two months later the situation has been reversed and Germany's allies are hard to find; only Russia is left. It was in order to define the conditions of her neutrality—for Berlin's benefit—that Russia summoned the Supreme Soviet and made a public statement regarding her policies. At the beginning of the third month of war, Hitler is practically alone, while the Allies see new supporters daily. The situation has not yet crystallized and depends on a German attack and Russian actions. But the simple fact that the Allies are obviously going to win has gained them new adherents.

The Tripartite Pact, the exchange of friendly letters between Greece and Italy, Rome's reserve toward Berlin, the good relations between France and Spain—all these events would not have counted for so much without the lifting of the embargo by the United States and, in another domain, without the results that seem to have followed the meeting of the Supreme Soviet. We hesitate to add still another to the enthusiastic commentaries of all the world saluting the real importance of lifting the embargo; but modestly call attention to the aftermath of the Soviet council—assuming that the Kremlin's terrible "orientalism" hasn't still another surprise in store for us. For a time at least we can apparently count on maintenance of the political line adopted by Stalin at the session. He called it, we are informed, only because during the previous few weeks the extremist group headed by Zhdanov—and at first supported by some generals, like Budyenny and Shaposhnikov—was unexpectedly supported by Marshal Voroshilov. He became the advocate of military intervention in Finland and Rumania, the annexation of Ruthenia and Slovakia, an aggressive policy toward Ankara and even expansion toward India. Stalin wanted to counteract this danger, and, seconded by the GPU, by Kalinin and all the moderates, he succeeded in having his foreign policy as revealed by Molotov accepted without any discussion. Consequently, informed Russians declared that Zhdanov had become "the hostage of Stalin and his moderate policies."

Even more interesting are the notes received from foreign observers in Moscow concerning what they consider will be Russia's immediate policy. They don't think Moscow will enter the war at any price or on either side. The USSR believes the war will be long. In order to have more freedom in Europe Moscow wants, momentarily at least, an understanding with Japan and also in a certain measure with the United States, in the form of new commercial treaties and improved relations between the Kremlin and the White House, now badly strained. In Europe, the USSR will play a 100-percent Russian game. This does not mean that it will be favorable to the democracies; far from it. On the contrary, it constitutes a grave danger to them that cannot be overlooked. But everything at present points to the fact that Russian military aid in any form whatever will be denied to Germany. During the last fortnight Stalin refused to give Hitler any armed forces. In addition, the Russian economic mission has made it clear that no material help could be promised to German war industries.

Did Molotov's speech dispel the illusions that Ribbentrop, Keitel and Brauchitsch still held regarding Russia's real intentions toward the Reich? Ribbentrop had persuaded Hitler that, according to Gestapo and GPU reports, Russia would enter the war on Germany's side next spring. According to these reports the USSR dreams only of unleashing world revolution within the democracies, on condition that Hitler allows bolshevism to enter Germany. But the Reichswehr was not impressed by these arguments and continues to believe that Stalin is betraying Hitler, that he wants to encircle Germany in the north, and that the Reich cannot count on anything whatsoever from Moscow except the bolshevization of Germany. Forty-eight hours before Molotov's speech, Hitler had to choose between these contrary opinions. I am told that he decided, on the word of Keitel, Brauchitsch, Goering and Ribbentrop, to begin a "total" war immediately on the western front, finish off France and England by next spring and then turn on Russia. The Reichswehr, however, knows perfectly well that that the Führer wouldn't dare attack Russia and that he was merely talking to rally them to an immediate offensive.

Today Hitler, without admitting it, must be convinced the USSR will remain neutral. Time isn't working in his favor, since the lifting of the embargo and the Russian decision. Will he not attack immediately with all his forces?

Most people think on the contrary that he is going to call political and military conferences one after another, dispatch his ambassadors to the four corners of the world, and continue to send Von der Schulenburg to Moscow with "new Ribbentrop proposals" offering Russia increasingly larger advantages in German industries in exchange for deliveries of planes or tanks. But Russia will accept the advantages and deliver little, if anything, in return. The Führer will be continually on the verge of a big Putsch for which he will claim to have superiority of equipment over the Allies. But every day the Allied forces are being augmented morally and materially. In these circumstances, many people are wondering whether Germany won't be in grave danger next spring. I understand that the Reich military chiefs have warned Hitler to expect a serious defeat before the end of the coming year.

Paris (by cable) GENEVIEVE TABOUIS

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The War in the West

Since the end of September, the European war has been restricted to the western front, but it is a different sort of war from that of 1914-18 along the same front. This time, Germany has not adopted the tactics of opening the attack and taking the strategic initiative. She has dropped the repetition of the Schlieffen Plan, consisting of a mass attack in the west at the outbreak of the war, with envelopment and breaking through, the execution of which gave her in five weeks, in 1914, the occupation of Belgium and northern France. Germany no longer has any hope of initial successes in the west. If, nevertheless, the Third Reich now undertakes an offensive there, it will do so under very different circumstances than if this offensive had been launched at the very beginning, before French mobilization and troop concentration and the arrival of the English contingents. Even assuming that Hitler ever had any chance in the west, which is doubtful, it has now vanished.

The other difference, as compared with 1914, lies in the altered character of the operations. In 1914 the campaign opened on both sides in the west with maneuvers on a large scale, with a war of movement, which only later became stabilized in a war of positions. This time the struggle in the west begins as the most complicated and concentrated form of position warfare, a war of fortresses. In the First World War the battle for fortresses represented only transitory, though important, episodes such as the siege of Belgian fortresses in 1914 and the bitter struggle around Verdun in 1916. In this war, the struggle for the huge fortified areas, the Maginot Line and the Siegfried Line, becomes the central task from the very beginning.

But not only that: in addition, the whole system of fortifications today is constructed differently from that of 1914. The fortifications in the First World War consisted of isolated forts or groups of forts, works of small extent which could be surrounded and besieged without great difficulty. The Maginot Line and the Siegfried Line, on the contrary, consist of entire zones of fortifications which, as a whole, constitute heavily armed fronts. A wide extent, deep entrenchment over a great width, enormous equipment with every possible means of defense, an extensive network of communications with the rear—all this is characteristic both of the French and of the German fortifications. But the method employed, the type of construction, is different.

The Maginot Line is a system of massive permanent forts, especially in the central part between Luxemburg and the Rhine. Its most important masses are buried deep below the surface and are so extensive that large bodies of troops can be housed in permanent garrisons. They are connected with each other, are mechanized on a large scale and have powerful fire concentration. Both the artillery and the defenders are extremely well protected. The defenders are provided with everything necessary to enable them to offer prolonged resistance, from stocks of ammunition to articles for the troops' personal comfort.

The Siegfried Line, on the other hand, is mainly composed of a large number of medium and small fortifications, blockhouses and "bunkers." The last in reality are covered firing nests with only partially ensured communications with one another. The isolated small groups of defenders must fend for themselves, their supplies of ammunition and foodstuffs are limited and conditions for prolonged occupation of the firing nests are very unfavorable. By repeated attacks, permanent battles and the great intensity of the enemy artillery fire, the garrisons of the "bunkers" of the Siegfried Line can fairly easily be exhausted and their resistance broken down, while the individual fortifications can be isolated from each other and partially laid in ruins. The other weak points of the Siegfried Line are the consequences of its overhasty construction. The nature of the soil and the strength of the building materials were insufficiently proved. Its strong points, on the other hand, are the considerable depth of the fortified line and its equipment with various obstacles which hamper a break-through.

The two lines of fortification in the west are supported in the rear by the real front-line troops. Behind these are gigantic reserves, among which the motorized and mechanized units are particularly important. Both French and German strategy count on the mobile defensive maneuvering of the reserves concentrated in the rear, should the fortified line be partially broken through. The maneuvering mobility is of the greatest importance in those places where the fortified line extends to lesser depths—in France to the north of Luxemburg, in Germany north and south of Aix-la-Chapelle and in Baden. Thus the modern war of fortifications must consist of these phases: (1) The capture of the approaches to the fortified lines, their actual advance posts; (2) the break through the fortified lines; (3) field battle behind the fortifications against the enemy's mobile reserves. It follows, therefore, that the campaign cannot be concluded by breaking through the fortified lines.

A German attack on the Maginot Line would of necessity entail far greater sacrifices than would the storming of the Siegfried Line by the French. In any event, German strategy is not accustomed to operating in restricted spaces. In view of these considerations, the German High Command may decide to turn from the

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Maginot Line and attack France by breaking through Holland and Belgium. The risk involved in such an undertaking would be enormous. The Dutch and Belgian armies, which together make a powerful combination of some million troops, would then be fighting side by side with the large Anglo-French army. In that case, the German army would find itself faced with the added task of having to overcome the Dutch-Belgian fortified belt. Attacking operations in this narrow defile of the Dutch-Belgian defensive positions might well bring about the complete routing of the German army. Thereupon it would be exposed to counter-attacks by the mobile maneuver of the French army. This maneuver has, since the battle of the Marne, been the specialty of French strategy, which excels in it.

If an attempt to break through via Holland-Belgium is made and fails, as it almost certainly would, then the northwest German frontier would be laid open to attack. While the neutrality of Holland and Belgium may be a hindrance in the way of German offensive strategy, it is, to a far greater extent, cover for the Rhinish-Westphalian industrial district, the center of the German armament industry. Should the German High Command assume the risk of attempting to break through Holland and Belgium in order to bring about a war of movement, the Third Reich will be exposing itself to the danger of seeing the war of movement carried into German territory.

General Gamelin's strategy corresponds entirely to the method of economic warfare that is currently being waged. In the Third Reich, however, there is a conflict between the economic situation and the tactics adopted by its High Command. The military chiefs of Hitler Germany are faced with this dilemma—if they remain passive in the west, then the Reich can hold out longer, but in that event the High Command has strategically no hope. It will be forced to submit to a siege, and its economic exhaustion is inevitable in any case. But should the High Command become active on the western front and take the offensive, it will very quickly use up its stocks of munitions and the country's economic resources in battle, so that Germany's war exhaustion will be accelerated. Both solutions are dangerous for Germany, and there can be no middle path. Time is working on the side of the western powers.

Is it perhaps possible, however, that Germany can obtain sufficient war supplies from Eastern Europe? The decisive source of imports can be only the Soviet Union, for Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania are of secondary importance in view of the gigantic requirements of the German war machine. In Molotov's well known letter to von Ribbentrop the utmost limit of Germano-Russian economic exchanges is set at the maximum of the last few years. This utmost limit is somewhat modest. In 1929 Germany imported goods from Russia to a total of 425,000,000 marks, and in 1931 to a total of 303,000,000 marks. By 1938, imports were down to 47,000,000 marks. Even the highest figure of past years represents only from six to eight percent of Germany's imports of raw materials and foodstuffs during 1938. A good deal of time must elapse before Russian exports to Germany can be brought up from the low 1938 level to the high 1929 level, for they must be increased nearly tenfold.

Another factor that must be taken into consideration is that it will be extremely difficult for Hitler Germany to offer Soviet Russia an adequate economic equivalent in return. German reserves in gold and foreign currency are almost non-existent, and the German export industry is now working mainly on war requirements. On the other hand, Soviet Russia's own needs of raw materials for war purposes have recently increased enormously. Russia has carried out an extensive mobilization; the effectives of the Red Army have been almost trebled. To this it must be added that the Soviet government will decide the question from a political standpoint. To what extent will it be willing to support Hitler Germany in the prosecution of the war? Diplomatic coöperation is not the only thing which exists between the Soviet Union and the Third Reich—they are also rivals for domination in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union has hastened to deprive the Third Reich of the Galician oil fields, the source of the most important and most costly raw material of war. It has hastened to occupy the most important strategic positions in respect to the Third Reich, both in Eastern Galicia, where it has barred Germany's path to Rumania, and in the Baltic states, through which it is now in a position to block Germany completely in the Baltic Sea. It is questionable, in view of the deep-rooted distrust manifested by these counter-measures, whether the Soviet Union will be prepared to support the Third Reich with war supplies for any length of time.

Though it would be dangerous to underestimate German resources and armament, it is nevertheless true that the balance of military strength between the belligerents will constantly shift in favor of the Anglo-French coalition. Here again, time is working against Germany. The Allies' superiority at sea is enormous. As early as the spring of 1940, the Anglo-French air arm will exceed Goering's aviation in numbers.

But the decisive factor, from a military standpoint, is that the German army on a war footing represents numerically a much more limited strength than was at first believed. In September, after mobilization, the German army comprised from 100 to 120 infantry divisions. Before war broke out, however, it was to be assumed that in the event of war it would comprise at least 150 divisions at the beginning. In September Hitler simply was not able to attack both in the east and in the west at the same time. It has now been revealed that the Third Reich is having the greatest

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difficulty in constituting its reserve divisions. It lacks the necessary officers and trained reserves, and this to an even greater extent than had originally been estimated. As France possesses far greater trained reserves than the Third Reich, as the British army is being rapidly developed, and as both France and the British Empire are throwing in their very strong overseas reserves, the Allies can doubtless count, in a long war, upon their armies' attaining numerical superiority.

It would be futile to attempt to prophesy the duration of the war. But even today, we can assume two extremely critical periods for the German High Command if the war continues. The first critical period for the Third Reich must occur in the spring of 1940. The exact extent of German stocks of munitions and war reserves is not known exactly, but they are undoubtedly lower than Goering has claimed. An acute shortage of war supplies may well bring about a considerable weakening of the war strength of the Third Reich after six or nine months of war, and have a widespread effect on the evolution of military operations. The moral resistance of the Reich army in a war of attrition has not yet been proved. Above all, the economic and psychological exhaustion of the civil population, without doubt the most vulnerable point of Hitler Germany's war strength, will already be considerable as early as the spring of 1940.

Presuming a continuance of the war past this period, the second extremely acute and presumably decisive crisis of the Third Reich must come after the second winter of war, in the spring of 1941. At the present time the Third Reich is approximately in the same economic position as that in which Germany found herself during the First World War, in the autumn of 1916. From that time on Germany could last through only two more war winters. The exhaustion of Germany's wartime economic system after eighteen months of war is almost as certain as is the ruin of the whole country. Moreover, at that time a decisive military factor will be the considerable numerical superiority of the land and air arms of the Anglo-French coalition, while the total defeat of the Third Reich may well be accelerated by new anti-Hitler factors in Eastern Europe.

MAX WERNER

Brumaire: II

The Soviet Union as a Fascist State[1]

THE FOREIGN POLICY of the Soviet Union for these past twenty years has been one with which all liberal opinion in its variety could strongly sympathize. It was, in the main, a cautious policy, aiming at the preservation of the Soviet Union and consequently at the maintenance of peace. In the Orient and other areas of open conflict, it endeavored to assure some measure of support to struggling nationalist revolutions without endangering general interests. Its treatment of nationalism was that of the 1922-23 Lenin rather than that of Marxian internationalist theory. Where it could safely do so, it opposed every militarist or imperialist venture. It made alliances that could not be reconciled with radical prejudice—sealing the bond with Mustapha Kemal, with Mussolini, with Chiang Kai-shek, although these men had massacred communists and were determined opponents of social revolution—but such alliances in each case served a tactical purpose of supreme importance for the development of the Soviet Union itself, for general peace and security.

An immense alteration has now taken place in the nature of Soviet foreign policy. It is no longer cautious, it no longer aims at peace, and its objectives are no longer such as can be foreseen with justifiable confidence by any man living. More: by using means so dangerous and contradictory, Stalin has made it impossible to discern any honorable socialist purpose or intention beneath the successive maneuvers in which the new policy is made known. Even supposing what I cannot believe, that his objective actually might be an advance toward world socialism, the course he has adopted would seem to be the one least likely to achieve it. No amount of trickery or card-sharping can alter the fact that he has embarked upon the most dangerous of all games, the one in which his antagonists are best equipped to win, and the one which the letter and spirit of socialist thought have always most specifically condemned. Temporary success in this policy, however brilliant, will blind few people outside Russia to its adventurous and Bonapartist character, its central intellectual ignominy and its total lack of principle.

The agreement with Hitler does not, of course, involve all this. On the face of it, the Soviet-Nazi pact of non-aggression is no different from a number of similar agreements entered into by the Soviet Union with fascist and reactionary forces. But every successive event in the development of this Nazi-Bolshevik entente points to the existence of a much more comprehensive agreement, the essence of which is that Soviet Russia now accepts the Nazi doctrine of *Lebensraum*, with its assertion of the sovereign rights of great powers over their weaker neighbors. The doctrine of *Lebensraum* differs from all preceding forms of impe-

[1] Comment on Mr. Sheean's articles appears in the editorial section of this issue. — THE EDITORS

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rialism by refusing to claim any justification except power. The concept of benefit to the governed or conquered peoples ("for the good of the governed") disappears altogether, to be succeeded by a concept of power "inherent" and of rights "inherent" in the master-state over the surrounding servant-states. In the shifting development of fascism this theory came late, and no amount of Nazi verbiage can conceal the fact that it is in essence an old-fashioned German military idea transformed. The Haushofer-Tukhachevsky notion for which eight generals and some thousands of officers died in Russia not long ago is now taken over by Stalin as his own. And "Fascism," as Izvestia says, "is a matter of taste."

This is the point at which the Soviet Union, having borrowed so much of fascist delusional technique and hagiology, passes beyond tactical mystifications altogether and takes up a clearly fascist position. You cannot assume "inherent" rights of the kind indicated in the Soviet-Nazi partition of Europe unless you have departed altogether from the fundamental beliefs of socialism. Those fundamental beliefs have seemed, for twelve years now, to be receding into the mists of pre-Stalinist theory. A vast and growing bureaucracy, a huge army, a state organized under despotic dictatorship, had little to do with the socialism they professed, but so long as they did profess it and centered their attention upon their own society, it was possible to keep on thinking that perhaps some day practice would begin to catch up with theory. I do not see how anybody can imagine that this astute and in fact brilliant series of double-crosses which Stalin is now administering to everybody on all sides—including his own followers and those who naïvely believe he means anything he says—will serve a socialist purpose. They will serve a specifically Russian purpose for a short time, but it is the working class of Europe that has to pay for these triumphs in blood and labor. The war itself was brought on by the ratification of the Hitler-Stalin pact, and its subsequent developments have been considerably affected by the diplomatic and military progress of Stalin's course. He is taking up imperial positions so as to be stronger against the unknowable future, and preferred this to more limited plans for a knowable future. Whether he falls temporarily on the side of his new fascist friends or on that of his old democratic dupes, or on each in turn, the ends to be served will be his own—*i. e.*, those of a despotic military and terroristic dictator whose aim is power alone. Radical opinion and feeling in all countries will be asked to believe that the aim is international socialism and to give Stalin a blank check, a permanent vote of confidence, to engage in any opportunist adventure he may fancy for the rest of his life, assuming that he knows, and he alone, how these ingenious deceptions and manipulations can bring about a good result. The Left is asked to believe that Stalin will fight fascism by helping it win its war, and then "take it over"; or that he will get everything he can from his fascist allies and then turn on them; or that he will be able to stay out of the war indefinitely, in spite of the new dangers to which he daily exposes himself and the Soviet Union.

The Communist Parties of the various countries may believe all this. They are small, compact parties for the most part, made up of persons who have identified the Soviet Union completely with the class struggle and will continue to give it a blind and unthinking loyalty. But, as I said in the first of these two papers, the moral authority of the communist movement among people of the Left was based not upon the communists themselves but upon the liberals and radicals who accorded it. These are far more numerous among both workers and intellectuals than are the communists. With most of them, the Soviet Union has grown to be a more dubious investment of confidence every year. The disastrous development inside the Soviet Union, leading to military dictatorship supported upon terror and systematic delusion, has long seemed dangerously similar to fascism, so that sometimes one system looked like a parody of the other—just as Molotov's note on the occupation of Poland sounded like a parody of Hitler. But the entente now established between the Stalinist foreign policy and that of Hitler, based upon a notion of *Lebensraum* shared between them, destroys any distinction so far as international affairs are concerned, and it will be surprising indeed if Left opinion not enrolled in the small Communist Parties does not reconsider and apply to the Soviet Union the same critical faculty it uses on other imperial states.

It may be wondered, since the Soviet Union has been developing inexorably in this way ever since Stalin seized the supreme power, why anybody should have waited until now to observe it. The steps have been pointed out with much emphasis for twelve years, chiefly by reactionary enemies of the Soviet Union and by dissenting ex-Bolsheviks. The reasons why I, in particular, have abstained from criticism of the Soviet Union, may give some suggestion of why others have done so. I will enumerate these reasons:

1. The Soviet Union represented a tremendous historic effort at the construction of a society, and as such merited the deepest respect even when its course seemed inexplicable on any socialist basis;

2. Accusations by reactionaries and factionary ex-Bolsheviks always required more proof than any ordinary statement;

3. The foreign policy of the Soviet Union, whatever its internal regime, was always enlightened and used against fascism and reaction;

4. Among communist militants, especially in China and Spain, human types of a very high order were produced, who often seemed the most admirable servants of progress;

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5. The policies of the Soviet Union, internally and externally, whatever their shortcomings when measured against the principles of socialism, did seem on the whole more likely to lead to a better future than the policies of the imperialist states.

The fifth point has now, it seems to me, become so flagrantly untrue that it compels a reconsideration of all the others, overrides them at last and obliges a recognition of the counter-revolutionary, militarist character of Stalin's dictatorship, the main result of which, in my opinion, will be to prolong war suffering for many years in a Bonapartist era of wars and truces, and, with them, to induce a wave of black reaction throughout the world. The Russian Revolution and its aftermath, which once seemed capable of introducing valid new principles into the structure of human society, will have gone through a process not greatly unlike that of the great French prototype. The thesis, communism, produced an antithesis, fascism, from which we have now the Hitler-Stalin synthesis; and these twenty years have been only another chapter—however significant—in the long passion and tragedy of the workers of the world.

VINCENT SHEEAN

"Herr Vogt"

THE LIFE OF POLITICAL EXILES becomes infected with special states of mind which are unimaginable for men who have a country. Those precisely whose principles and interests have raised them above the ordinary citizen, now, lacking the citizen's base and his organic relation to society, find themselves contracted to something less. And, even aside from the difficulties which the exile encounters in finding work and making friends in a foreign country, it is hard for him to take hold in the new place, to build himself a real career there, because he lives always in hope of going home when the regime by which he has been banished shall have fallen.

For communists the situation is even harder. They have set themselves against the whole complex of society, and they must try to live in it without being of it. They are thrown in on one another and themselves, and they develop bad nerves and bad tempers; they are soon wasting their mental energy and their emotions in sterile controversies and spiteful quarrels. Group enthusiasm turns to intrigue, and talent becomes diseased with exhibitionism. The relationships of revolutionary brotherhood become degraded by jealousy and suspicion. Always braced against the pressure that bears down on him both as an alien and as an enemy of society, the self-alienated man gives way to impulses to round upon his associates and accuse them of selling out the cause; always subject to secret espionage, always in danger of deportation or prison, he is obliged to suspect an informer in every person who seeks his acquaintance, becomes demoralized by shattering fears lest those closest to him may be scheming to destroy him by a betrayal for which his own poverty suggests a motive.

Of this danger Marx and Engels were well aware. "One comes to see more and more," Engels wrote Marx on February 12, 1851, "that the emigration is an institution which must turn everybody into a fool, an ass and a common knave, unless he manages to get completely away from it." But it was impossible for them really to get away: their letters continue to rasp with quarrels over revolutionary funds, sabotage of political meetings, ungenerous judgments, uneasy fears. Marx writes, in a letter to Weydemeyer on August 2 of the same year, that on top of all his other troubles he is obliged to support "the baseness of our enemies, who have never once attempted to attack me objectively, but who, revenging themselves for their own impotence, spread unspeakable slanders about me and try to blacken my reputation. . . . So far as I myself am concerned, I laugh at all this idiocy, and it doesn't distract me from my work for a moment, but you can imagine that it does not produce any very salutary effect on my wife, who is ill and is occupied from morning to night with the most depressing problems of getting along and whose nervous system is run down, when every day foolish gossips bring her the stinking exhalations from the poisonous democratic sewer."

The crowning affront of this phase of Marx's life was an attack by a man named Karl Vogt, a German professor of Geology, who had sat on the Left of the Frankfort Assembly and who had afterwards lived in exile in Switzerland. In the course of one of those wars of exiles, whose complications it would be unprofitable to trace, Vogt published in January, 1860, a brochure in which he accused Marx of blackmailing former revolutionists who were trying to go along with the regime in Germany, of fabricating counterfeit money in Switzerland and of exploiting the workers for gain. This provoked Marx to write and publish in November of the same year a long counter-attack on Vogt. His friends did their best to dissuade him, telling him he was wasting his time and his money (since it was printed at his own expense); but Marx insists in the book itself that, filthy though the whole affair is, he owes it to his wife and children to make a defense of his character and activities.

"Herr Vogt" did certainly vindicate Marx; and it made out a convincing case against Vogt on the basis

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of the charge which had been printed in a paper sponsored by Marx and which had started the polemics between him and Vogt: that Vogt was a paid propagandist in the service of Napoleon III. Yet the reader is likely to agree with Marx's friends that Marx might better, as the Marxists say, have left Herr Vogt to History. For when the republican French government, after Sedan, published the archives of the Second Empire, it was found that Karl Vogt had indeed received forty thousand francs from the Emperor. And in the meantime Marx's book about him—in spite of a chapter of acute analysis of international events in Europe and of a characteristically macabre caricature of one of those police agents who were the curse of the exile's life—proved certainly one of the dreariest, most tedious and most exasperating productions of which a man of genius was ever proud. Here Marx, by very force of his compulsion to go into every subject exhaustively, to fix each point with the last degree of exactitude, exposes a few ignoble lies and frauds with a machinery whose disproportion to its function only makes them appear more trivial. Marx's habitual sneer, which did duty for normal laughter and which sometimes seems almost passionate, can only here push mercilessly for pages jokes which are both forced and disgusting (Marx was almost as excremental as Swift).

And yet "Herr Vogt" itself is not without a moment of greatness which stands at the end like the signature of Marx. When Vogt's charges had first been made, Marx had brought a libel suit in Germany against a paper which had given them currency. The Berlin court had refused his plea; he had appealed it and again been refused; he had taken it before the Supreme Court, and for the third time it had been rejected. Now, thwarted, he sets his brand of scorn with stinging and tragic force on these judges of the petty courts of law who will not justify the higher judge:

> Where then is the argument to be found on which this rejection is based? Where is the answer to the detailed petition drawn up by my attorney? Here it is:
>
> Under III: "Now it does not appear in the present case that there has been such a judicial error."
>
> If we strike out of this sentence under III the single little word "not" [which stands at the end of the sentence in German], then the decision runs thus: "Now it does appear in the present case that there has been such a judicial error." In this way the order of the Court of Appeals is annulled and annihilated. It will only stand up if one sticks on at the end that single little word "not," with which Herr von Schlickmann in the name of the Supreme Court rejects the petition of Herr Justizrath Weber.
>
> *He himself has spoken.* "Not!" Herr von Schlickmann does "not" refute the legal arguments adduced by my attorney; he does "not" make any attempt to discuss them; he does "not" mention them even. Herr von Schlickmann had of course his good and sufficient reasons for his order; but he prefers to keep silence about them. "Not!" The power of demonstration possessed by this tiny word exclusively resides in the authority, in the hierarchical position, of the person who takes it in his mouth. In and by itself "not" means "nought." "Not!" *He himself has spoken.*
>
> So the Supreme Court has forbidden me to bring suit against the "democrat" F. Zabel.
>
> So ended my case in the Prussian courts.

What is really behind the whole book, one realizes when one comes to this conclusion, is the helpless indignation of the man of integrity whose principles have made him a rebel, in the face of a judicial system which, precisely because he is a rebel, will not recognize that integrity. One of the things that infuriated Marx most was a statement in the court's decision that there was nothing in the published slanders from which Marx's reputation should suffer. And Marx's case is the type of all such cases. The court says: You make war on society; why should you expect vindication from its tribunals? Had not the judges of Augsburg decided against Karl Vogt in his suit against an Augsburg paper which had printed the accusations against him just as the judges of Berlin had decided against Karl Marx? Why reduce the thing to absurdity by appealing to the bourgeois court to give you a good character with your comrades as a sincere and self-denying revolutionist?

For another kind of charge had been involved which was serious enough and had enough truth in it to goad Marx—as such charges always goaded him—more sharply perhaps than all the foolish stories of counterfeit money and blackmail. Vogt had included in his book a letter from a Prussian lieutenant named Techow, written in 1850, at the time of the split in the Communist League, of which Techow had been a member. "If Marx," this former comrade had said, "had only as much heart as intellect, if he had only as much love as hate, I would go through fire for him, even though he has not only on several occasions indicated his utter contempt for me, but has finally expressed it quite frankly. He is the first and only one among us whom I would trust for the capacity for leadership, the capacity for mastering a big situation without losing himself in details." But Marx, said Techow, had come to be possessed by the ambition for personal domination: he could now tolerate only inferiors and despised his working-class supporters.

So Karl Marx must make his own court of justice, in which he can vindicate his moral superiority against the police with their spies, the petty officials, the big officials, all the hollow simulacra of the Law, who are able without effort, without suffering, without intellectual lights, to reject what ought to be and what must certainly come, simply by writing that single word "not."

Between "Herr Vogt" and "The Class Struggles in France" lies a decade of the life of exile. The difference between them is shocking. In Marx's writing of 1850,

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when he was a man in his early thirties, for whom it was still a fine gesture to spend his patrimony on a revolutionary paper and pawn all his personal belongings, still flushed from his fight in Cologne, he had exulted in the consciousness of mastery of a vigorous and original mind with a new intellectual world before it; in "Herr Vogt" of 1860, half-atrophied in the monotony of London, with Jenny now in so bad a nervous condition that when she finally comes down with smallpox just as "Herr Vogt" is being published, the doctor is to tell Karl that the infection has probably saved her from a mental collapse, he can only grind the wheels of his mind, spit out acid puns, rail reproachfully against that society which he has once so roundly defied.

And his protest itself will be stifled. He got rid of about eighty copies in England, but the book was never distributed in Germany, because of the failure of the German publisher who had brought it out in London. Marx's agreement with this young German had been that they should go halves on both profit and loss; but the young man had had a partner who did not hesitate to invoke the law and to claim the whole costs of printing, so that Marx not only lost what he had put up but had to pay out almost as much again. He had never thought to get a written contract. EDMUND WILSON

Monopoly in Brimstone

THE RISE of modern industry has given brimstone a status higher than it enjoyed in ancient theology. It has become our principal source of sulphuric acid; and sulphuric acid is the alkahest of present-day technology. Almost every manufactured product known has, at some stage, been touched by the modern magic. The necessities and comforts and luxuries of every American citizen wait upon brimstone.

In 1937 fertilizers and insecticides, oil refining, chemicals, iron and steel, coal products, paints and pigments and the metallurgical industries each used from 500,000 to 2,000,000 tons of sulphuric acid. Rayon, rubber, cellulose films, explosives, pulp and paper and scores of others required smaller amounts. The manufacture of every explosive of significance in modern warfare requires sulphuric acid. There seems to be some relationship between war and brimstone.

Most of our sulphuric acid is made from brimstone. Here is the narrowest, the most vital and the most closely held bottleneck in American industry.

America did not become a factor in brimstone production until 1904. Deposits of almost pure sulphur had been discovered by oil operators, in the salt domes of the Gulf Coast area, as early as 1869. But geophysical conditions made extraction impossible under the existing mining techniques. In the nineties Herman Frash, a Standard Oil chemist, perfected a process involving the forcing of superheated steam into the underground deposit, thus melting the sulphur in place and permitting its extraction in liquid form. This process revolutionized the industry and launched the Union Sulphur Company on its fifteen-year domination of the world brimstone market.

The Sicilian producers, who had enjoyed a decade of comfortable world monopoly, were shortly brought to heel. One year of disastrous competition forced the Italians to sue for peace. A gentlemen's agreement was signed in 1907, which gave the brimstone gentlemen a decade of peace, rigid prices and liberal profits.

The original patents issued to Herman Frash in the nineties prevented any competitor from entering the field. One of the ironies of this fantastic story was that the federal courts finally, in 1912, decided that the technique covered by the patents was not patentable.

In 1914 the Freeport Sulphur Company, and in 1919 the Texas Gulf Sulphur Company, began exploitation of huge sulphur domes on the Texas Gulf Coast. By 1917 Freeport was producing 500,000 tons annually. Texas Gulf has averaged over 1,000,000 tons per year, reaching a high of 1,743,829 tons in 1937.

The vast war demands of 1914-19 prevented any unfortunate outbreak of competition. In fact, our own entry into the brimstone market in April, 1917, brought a sharp, if wholly unwarranted, rise in prices. The Federal Trade Commission officially reported that, "The cost to Freeport Sulphur Company in 1917 was $6.15 per ton . . . the Union Sulphur Company's costs were $5.73 per ton." Brimstone was then selling for $18 per ton f.o.b. the mine, as it had been since the gentlemen agreed upon that price in 1907. The War Industries Board raised it to $22.50.

The end of the war caused a precipitate drop of more than 50 percent in the demand for brimstone. The capacity of the industry had trebled. Thus the stage was set for an unfortunate interlude. In fact several years of relatively unstable prices followed—not disastrous but a bit disturbing. From 1919 to 1925 the average annual price at the mines varied from $15.11 to $19.76; the six-year average being $16.71. During those years Texas Gulf Sulphur, which had become the dominant producer, was able to earn only a little over .66 percent per year, on the ledger value of its stock. This deplorable condition could not be permitted to continue. The Webb-Pomerene Act had provided a most excellent tool for the job that had to be done. The three brimstone producers organized the Sulphur Export Corporation—called Sulexco—and restored order in their industry.

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A new agreement was made with the Sicilians in 1923, dividing the world market (except North America and Italy) on a 75-25 basis, with Sulexco getting the larger share. The price quickly rose—guided no doubt by Adam Smith's "unseen hand"—to $17.99 per ton. The next year it was back to the familiar $18, where it remained, despite wars and revolutions and depressions—and the New Deal, for the next twelve years. In 1924 Union Sulphur simplified the game by exhausting its deposit in Louisiana, leaving the play in the hands of the two Texas producers.

During the past two decades only two American producers have threatened the monopoly. They are both tiny operators, their average output being about six percent of the total, and both are now operating on properties owned, in whole or in part, in fee simple or by lease arrangements, by Texas Gulf Sulphur. A casual observer would not know they were in the game.

A more serious threat appeared a decade ago when a Norwegian company, Orkla Grube Aktiebolag, developed a new process for recovering sulphur from pyrites. There are no known deposits of native sulphur that can be recovered by the Frash process except those along the Gulf Coast. But there are almost limitless pyrite deposits scattered all over the world. For a quarter-century one, two or three American companies had held unchallenged an effective, stable and quite profitable world monopoly. Orkla constituted a real challenge. A contract was drawn, signed and sealed. Orkla was permitted to produce and sell 70,000 tons per year—but in only Norway, Sweden or Finland. Furthermore, Orkla was to receive—from Sulexco—$1 per ton for each ton so delivered; for what purpose or to what end, contract sayeth not. A reading of the agreement suggests possibilities.

Orkla will make its sales at five pounds, ten shillings, British sterling, per ton delivered.

Sulexco will pay Orkla $1 per ton for every ton delivered by Orkla in 1933 sold at £5/10 in the above markets, up to 70,000 tons.

An even more curious set of arrangements appears:

During the year 1933 Orkla shall take no steps towards adding to its present sulphur-producing plant.

In a later revision of the contract this addition is made:

Orkla agrees as far as lies in its power that it will not license to others the use of the Orkla process . . . nor assist others in the development and use of the process other than as already committed.

Texas Gulf Sulphur holds the patent rights for the United States. The agreement continues:

It is recognized in principle by both parties that it may be desirable to secure through purchase or otherwise certain patents in the joint territory (Europe, Asia, Africa and the outlying islands) which may have a potential value in the production of sulphur . . . they shall be acquired jointly . . . payment being two-thirds by the Sulphur Export Corporation and one-third by Orkla. . . . No license for such jointly held patents shall be issued . . . without the consent of both parties.

Did someone say a self-regulating economy?

These threats, and potential threats, from domestic and foreign sources are scarcely discernible from a study of the mathematics of brimstone. Prices, *in the long run*, have been $18 per ton. Extraction costs have *tended to be* $6 per ton. Profits, *on the whole*, have been excellent.

Scientific corporate accounting was in its infancy in 1903. Furthermore, government had not yet begun prying into strictly private affairs. The data are fugitive, but it is safe to say that Union Sulphur Company earned well over 100 percent per year on its original investment, for more than twenty years.

The Freeport Sulphur Company originally issued 2,000 shares of stock to its parent, the Freeport Texas Company, of Delaware. In 1914 this stock paid a cash dividend of $49.87 per share; and in 1915 one of $100 per share. The war saved the day for Freeport. In 1917 this same stock paid $637.50; in 1918, $2,150; but in 1919 it dropped to a paltry $500. The payments, of course, went to the overhead holding company, the Freeport Texas Company (of Delaware) which owned all the stock. Since 1919 only consolidated reports by the Freeport Texas Company are available. This company has paid cash dividends of $37,597,584 during the past twenty-five years, or 24.75 percent per year on the ledger value of the stock.

These figures do not show the profitableness of brimstone mining; they show only the profits going to the sulphur *company*. Brimstone deposits are discovered as a by-product of oil exploration. The deposits are subleased to the sulphur companies. The oil companies may get far greater profits from the venture than do the sulphur companies.

Freeport, for fifteen years, has operated its great Hoskins Mound deposit under a royalty contract with the Texas (oil) Company, by which the Texas Company gets 70 percent of the profits. These royalty payments during the past five years, on the Grand Ecaille dome, have amounted to $33,191,229.

There are two other small items. The company now owns a property worth at least $20,000,000. Most of this represents reinvestment of corporate profits. Also, the company carries brimstone above ground at "cost." On the balance sheet at January 1, 1939, this item was $5,139,417, representing 960,786 tons of brimstone. If this were valued at present prices the "assets" item would be increased by almost $10,000,000.

It is difficult to compute an average annual rate of return on the capital ventured in this enterprise. But it is safe to say that is a bit higher than competitive dogma would justify.

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Texas Gulf Sulphur Company has been a far more profitable venture. Six hundred and thirty-five thousand shares of common stock were originally issued, having a par value of $6,350,000. In 1926 the company split this stock 4 for 1; however, no change was made in its ledger value.

During the past eighteen years this company has paid a total of $124,117,500 in cash dividends. On the basis of the original value of common stock this amounts to 95.46 percent per year. However, if one looks carefully, the picture improves. The company now has a property worth over $60,000,000. This increase, in so far as it represents any actual investment, has all come out of profits.

There is still more to the picture. On January 1, 1939, the brimstone inventory of 3,289,728 tons was carried at about $18,000,000. If this inventory were valued at present prices this item would be increased by more than $30,000,000. And the company has underground reserves at Boiling Dome alone, according to its own estimates, of 45,000,000 tons. That is more than has been produced in America during this century. In addition the company owns the rights on eighteen other deposits. No wonder the House of Morgan and the House of Mellon have made common cause here. Such a venture would reconcile the Capulets and the Montagues.

In Texas, Gulf Sulphur has always been considered a Mellon company. The underlying leases on its great Boiling Dome deposit were owned by a Mellon oil company. This company now owns at least one-third of the sulphur-company stock. But no Mellon man sits on the board of directors, though two members of the House of Morgan and several important officials of other Morgan companies hold directorships. By the way, there isn't a Texan on the Board of either company. Texas only furnishes the brimstone.

One evidence of monopoly is the failure of new enterprisers to enter the business. There have been newcomers in brimstone during the past quarter-century—but only two. And this despite the fact that profits have been alluring. And despite the equally trenchant fact that over one hundred sulphur domes have been found. As Alice remarked, "The cow isn't acting as we were told she would."

Another evidence of brimstone monopoly is the curious price behavior of the past decade. Surpluses might create havoc in cotton, or wheat, or prunes. Brimstone was unperturbed. During 1931 only 34 percent of the marketable supply was sold; in 1932, 29 percent; in 1933, about 46 percent; in 1938, only 29 percent again. And still the price held at $18 per ton. Today there are 4,500,000 tons in stock—two years' production. That is equivalent to 30,000,000 bales of American cotton. Prices fall in competitive industries under such conditions.

The brimstone story is a disquieting one for those who still dream of a system of free business enterprise. Here, in miniature and in clear colors, is a striking picture of modern monopoly in action. Techniques have been ruthlessly sabotaged. Prices have been held rigid on a worldwide market. Production and sales quotas have been rigorously cut to fit that price pattern. Profits have been fantastic.

We are a rich people—and a tolerant one. We can stand a reasonable amount of price-rigging, production sabotage and unemployment. But not too much.

We have run through a measurable portion of the family fortune. Sabotage becomes more common, and more painful. We need goods and we need jobs for the unemployed. Our tolerance wears thin. The brimstone boys, and all the other monopolists, are playing a dangerous game.

R. H. MONTGOMERY

Is This India's Chance?

When Mohandas Gandhi made his recent demand—"Independence *now*"—Indian nationalists, both at home and abroad, were quickened with the belief that the day had come. The much mooted contention that a general war in Europe would provide India with her chance to attain her national aims has gradually begun to take on actuality, and the conviction is growing that the National Congress Party is ready to seize the opportunity.

Yet, for the aging Indian leader it was the last resort. Vainly he sought for weeks past some sign from the British government which would assure his "humanitarian" heart that the Allies were fighting to defend democracy—a democracy that would embrace even India. Instead he received vague promises that the present constitutional status of India will be "open to modification in the light of Indian views" at the conclusion of the war. With one stroke of pen, the Imperial British government lost its last dependable friend in India. Gandhi has now joined the more radical leaders in declaring that the nationalist India cannot be a "partner with Britain in her war with Hitler. The Indian declaration shows clearly that there will be no democracy for India if Britain can prevent it."

So the lines are now drawn. India is in the paradoxical position of officially being at war with Germany yet not being in the British camp. On one hand the British government of India, without the consent of the Legislative Assembly, has dispatched Indian troops to Singapore and Egypt, and the Indian Princes, whose fortunes depend upon the continuation of British authority in India, have rushed to serve the Crown. On the other hand, the powerful Nationalist Party is striving to "prevent the exploitation of Indian resources for imperialist ends." In this effort, the Nationalists are joined by the Moderates, who had been advocating constitutional gradualism in coöperation with the British.

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The indications are that the first step in the strategy of the National Congress Party will be to take full advantage of their legislative control of the autonomous provinces. Among the eleven British India provinces, the Nationalists are in complete control of eight, and in the remaining three they have the largest single legislative blocs. The Prime Minister of Bombay has already introduced a resolution in the provincial Legislative Assembly calling upon Great Britain to regard India as an "independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution." A similar resolution has been introduced in the Assembly of Bihar, and the rest of the nationalist provinces are due to follow Bombay's lead.

If past experience proves true this time, the respective British governors of the eight provinces will veto such resolutions when passed. This will usher in the next move in the Congress strategy—Gandhi's followers will resign from provincial Cabinets while retaining their status as legislators. Six provincial Cabinets have already resigned. Thereupon the governors will have to call upon the leaders of the Opposition to form new Cabinets, which the Nationalists, retaining a majority in the legislatures, could vote down one after another. This procedure would paralyze the administration and force the governors to suspend the constitution and rule by ordinance.

As in the past, the Nationalists will come out from the closed Assembly halls to lead the masses in "direct action," such as a general strike, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience of the ordinances. This will undoubtedly be met by the government with strong repressive measures. Wholesale arrests will follow the government's repression until all the jails in India will be filled to capacity. In the wake of arrests will come baton charges and shootings of civil resisters, and it will be 1930 all over again.

The government's policy of repression, the Nationalists appear to calculate, will suffer from a new handicap which did not exist in 1930. Great Britain is engaged in a life-and-death war in Europe. Her desire to draw millions in men and money from India, as she did during the World War, will be thwarted by the Nationalist action. On the contrary, it might be found necessary to dispatch additional British troops to India to crush the native "mutiny," a measure England can ill afford for the duration of the war. Naturally, therefore, the Nationalists expect an early victory this time.

In risking the revival of this familiar pattern of Indian struggles by their refusal to meet Indian demands, the British seem to have banked heavily on three theories. It appears from the speeches of both Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, and Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, that they expect the Hindu-Moslem differences to foil the Nationalist coup. In the second place, the attitude of the Indian Princes seems to have been accepted as indicative of the support of the "subjects" of those Maharajahs. In the third place, they seem to think that the potential Russian menace on India's north and the threat of Japan in the east would have a sobering effect on Indian extremists.

Gandhi's one single concern is over Hindu-Moslem differences. Although the Mahatma, along with other Nationalist leaders, regards them as emanating from the "British policy of divide and rule," he is fully aware of their crippling effect on Indian nationalism. For the past two years, consequently, he has done his utmost to bring about a rapprochement between these two great communities, and there are signs that he will have thousands of Mohammedans following him in his renewed fight for freedom. In the second place, the Nationalists expect to paralyze the war aid of the Native Princes through the action of the All-India States People's Party, whose president is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, ranking Congress leader. So far as the threat of Russia and Japan is concerned, the Congress Party regards it as Britain's pet bogey.

However, even at this stage Gandhi has been quoted as saying that the Congress resolution "leaves the door open for satisfying the national demand and averting a crisis." There are indications that the Laborites in England may still successfully challenge the British government to proclaim Indian freedom as one of the war aims. Such action would give the neutral countries a positive proof of Britain's sincerity in her profession of democracy and win India as a willing ally. For this is India's chance as well as Britain's.

KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI

Sonnet of Jack

I give you day, our day, any day, for entering
Man's time on the earth, his world, for cutting aslant
through his track.
At the crossroads here, bearing his heave-ho aback,
At the point where his damned-to-perdition sin and his
sheltering
Spirit join his throat-throbbing, bird-singing
Joy—here, stubble-wise and tool-handed, into the day
comes Jack,
Jack Plumber, Jack Plowman, Jack Scrivner, dowered
with much or the lack
Of it, man-willed, washed up as beach drift out of protean
weltering.

His friends, then, with him, one to pull, take, haul, fetch
and carry,
Come with himself, no less in the reckoning—Bob, Dick
and Harry.
Or woman-formed, dainty in dalliance or strong in her
childings,
Kate, Mug or Prue. They, all, giving God praise, sown
thus as wildings
Spread free of the bony house toward heaven, their joy,
his or hers, say
What you will—dead Friday and born again already on
Thursday.

ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

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Washington Notes

The Allies Have Wooden Nickels

As THESE NOTES are written, repeal of the arms embargo, formally speaking, is still very recent. In and out of the administration observers are trying to estimate its consequences. Technically, its principal immediate effect will be to permit the sale of airplanes; almost all other war supplies the Allies want could have been bought under the old law. But the embargo's repeal must also be accepted as a sign of the administration's willingness to place American industry at the disposal of England and France, the chief of Mr. Roosevelt's "measures short of war."

In the latter sense, it has called forth general befuddlement. It is not so much a leap in the dark as a double back somersault with half jackknife. As experts dolefully point out, the effect that a munitions trade will have on our national life will depend on how long the war lasts, what kind of a war it is, what sort of strategy England and France pursue. These are all matters that Mr. Roosevelt cannot hope to control, or even greatly to influence.

Suppose we listen to the experts on one narrow problem, the monetary value of war orders that this country is likely to receive. During last month's congressional debates, it was said again and again that England has about seven billions in gold, American bank balances, American securities, and France about a quarter as much. This was set as the maximum amount of Allied war purchases.

But take, for example, the question of American securities owned by British nationals, now being mobilized by the British government for sale in this country. Who can guess at what price they will be sold? It has already been demonstrated that rumors of British war purchases will push up a security, or group of securities, on the New York Stock Exchange. Conceivably the British government might succeed in selling its nationals' securities for two or three times their value of a few months ago. Although SEC officials are silent, many observers think that right now trading for the account of England is an important influence in Wall Street.

In congressional debates, experts point out, nothing was said about securities of corporations that, while strictly British, have an international market. Among them are mining properties, railroads and public utilities in Canada, Africa and South America. No doubt the British government would be reluctant to see control of these companies pass into American hands. But, during and after the last war, a number of important British enterprises, notably a drug chain, were sold to Americans, and, in a few years, the securities of these companies were back in England at greatly reduced prices. The amount of dollar exchange that could be raised in this fashion is certainly great, great enough to make the seven-billion figure meaningless.

Then, too, England is not going to stop selling us goods. Since the war began, the British government has relaxed its production restrictions on rubber, but it has not removed them. Experts here take it for granted that Britain means to keep up the price of rubber against this country. Our embargo-repeal act is going to give English companies a near-monopoly of transatlantic shipping, with the power to set rates as they wish. Much the same thing will be true of marine insurance.

It must be hastily added that these speculations of experts in Washington are only that. They have no precise information on how much money the Allies mean, in fact, to spend here, nor what devices they will use in obtaining dollar exchange. But they make a point that Congressmen and plain voters ought to heed. They say that the war of 1914-18 was, on the whole, a laissez-faire war. This time England and France are starting with totalitarian economies. In the white war that existed from 1934 onwards, Dr. Schacht had been able to devise ways of outtrading free-economy countries almost at will. There is lively suspicion that in 1936-38 he rigged European stock markets, especially in Amsterdam, to take advantage of the scares produced by Hitler's speeches. Unquestionably he gambled in world commodities on a gigantic scale; his exploits with Brazilian coffee are well known.

On the premise that England and France will also use totalitarian methods immensely more effective because of their greater resources, it can be argued both that they will spend unlimited amounts here and that they will make the United States, in effect, pay for the privilege of serving them. No one knows, however, whether this premise has validity. The totalitarian face worn by England and France may be a clown's mask; their own profit-seeking business men may prevent a totalitarian regime from functioning. All that seems sure is that the United States, with its helter-skelter economic structure, is now the world's chief curly-fleeced lamb. If the wolves don't bite, it will be Roosevelt luck.

Although no announcement has been made as I write, it is expected that the price of steel for the first quarter of 1939 will show only a slight increase. It is understood that it will be less than half the $7 a ton by which, according to the steel manufacturers, their raw-material costs have advanced. If this proves to be the case, it will be a great victory for the New Deal. In a world at war, it will no doubt go largely unnoticed. But if such controls had existed under Mr. Coolidge, there might never have been the 1929 boom or the worldwide collapse that followed, might never have been Hitler, might never have been the war. One way of stating the real meaning of the Roosevelt revolution is to say that in 1927 the only official publicly recognized as having a responsibility for the country's economic progress was the late Governor Strong of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, and his responsibility was primarily to the heads of the great New York commercial banks.

The TNEC—the instrument through which the New Deal has attempted to supervise steel prices—has just completed its investigation of the oil industry. It was inadequately reported in the newspapers; Congress has appeared to be largely oblivious of it. Yet, with minute thoroughness, the TNEC built up a case for the public regulation, and perhaps ownership, of all natural-resources industries. Bit by bit, the TNEC is writing a program for political action. It has established, in the eyes of most reasonable persons—including many nominal conservatives—that industries in

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which patents and the ownership of natural resources have a dominant part cannot be entrusted to private hands. Before long it will investigate a third great group of industries, those whose existence depends on tariff protection. If the Democratic Party is shrewd, it will write its platform next spring from the TNEC's bulky reports.

Washington T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Pardon Me for Pointing

I TRUST I may be pardoned for mentioning the fact—if only in a timid whisper—that there are a few problems in the United States which still remain, for the most part, as it were and in a manner of speaking, if I may say so, not quite solved. I know that these trivial little puzzles—comparatively easy and simple—are hardly worth mentioning when there are so many more important problems for us to settle in Europe, Asia and Africa. And yet it is difficult to escape the feeling that, busy as we may be with the far more serious and interesting problems of Finland and Latvia and Rumania and Poland, nevertheless we ought to find a fleeting moment to think about our own prosaic affairs.

There is probably still time before M-Day to mention that perhaps there may be an election next year. I do not mean to imply that there is the slightest possibility that Americans will not go to the polls in 1940. I merely intended to suggest ever so lightly that by that time we may be involved in the complicated process of not swapping horses in the middle of a stream. In which event any talk about our own problems will be an act of supererogation. But in this blessed prelude to M-Day, with all due respect to everybody, I would like to put forward the perhaps silly notion that in an election, if and when carried on, we shall have to face certain questions which keep bobbing up around pages 43 and 44 of The New York Times and other organs of our war news.

First there are those eleven million unemployed without whom no speech on the problems of today is quite complete. It does seem a little tiresome to be dragging them in all the time. After all, we've had them for ten years and it's pretty nearly time that we recognized them as old friends. But there they are. Are we going to perpetuate them or get rid of them? Who has a plan for this besides the two well known ones—I mean the Hooverian plan of balancing the budget and the Rooseveltian plan of unbalancing it? Can't anyone think of something else?

Then there is the problem of old-age insecurity. There are Dr. Townsend and Ham and Eggs Downey and Swing Band O'Daniel of Texas. But what is far more serious, there are the old folks. And you cannot solve their problems by piously whaling away at Townsend and Downey and O'Daniel. If they were all knocked into hellzapoppin tomorrow, the old folks would still remain.

Then there are the farmers—the submerged farmers, that vast army of small owners and sharecroppers who seem doomed to government subsidies forever—unless somebody can think of something to do about it before next November, or even next June, when the platform patriots get down to semantics or at least to double-talk.

Then there are several million people—oh, quite a few million—whose daily fare is not so good as that of those poor people in Europe who are living on war rations and over whose plight we are shedding so many tears.

Then there are the railroads, to get down to specific problems—which seems downright unmannerly. Can anybody think of something to do about these paupers? They're run down at the heel. About seventy of them are in the hands of 77b. Can't anyone think of something to do about 77b?

And the building industry. This is dangerous ground, I know. All the professional leaders of the Chamber of Commerce and the labor unions and the subcontractors' code authorities know precisely what to do about building. But building is about as flat as Poland. Of course Poland is more romantic. The trouble with the building industry is that it is right on our doorstep. If it were only in Manchukuo or Estonia we could do something about it. We could send a note to Hitler or Stalin. Or Mr. Steve Early could indignate, pinch-hitting under the new order for Mr. Hull. We could build some more battleships. But right here in the backyard it is such a humdrum, unattractive problem.

And the devil of all this is that in June we have got to sit down in at least a couple of conventions and tell the folks what we propose to do about these things. And what are we going to tell them? Perhaps we can meet all of these problems by a good old-fashioned ringing declaration that "in an hour of national peril, when the very foundations of civilization are threatened by the forces of barbarism and when democracy itself faces on every hand the menace of the dictators, it becomes the duty of every American to stand by the President." That ought to knock the eleven million, the sharecroppers, the underprivileged, the railroad paupers and 77b and all the other merely domestic problems for a loop.

I would not be so troubled about all these trivia were it not for one thing. Up to now the area of the United States and its possessions was 3,700,000 square miles. Such problems as have vexed us have been contained within the comparatively peaceful limits of this modest acreage. But now we have drawn a line around the entire Western Hemisphere 300 miles out to sea running from Tierra del Fuego to Halifax on one side and Vancouver on the other. And thus we have added another 6,000,000 square miles—as I calculate it—of hitherto unclaimed ocean to the acreage for which we are responsible. Any monkey business within this vast new ocean empire of ours, any combats between German and English ships, any torpedoing or gun shooting, piracy or privateering in this space, has been annexed to our other domestic problems.

We take these problems in our stride so calmly that this really need not ruffle our tranquillity. Yet somehow I cannot get these 6,000,000 new square miles off my conscience. Perhaps the thing to do is to declare a truce on all the problems in our old land area and just limit ourselves to the problems in our new ocean domain. This ought to be easy if we can only get the land problems to see it that way. Anyhow, it's a suggestion.

JOHN T. FLYNN

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The Chekhov Theatre's First

The Possessed, by George Shdanoff. Based on ideas from Dostoevsky's writings, especially "The Possessed." Translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. Lyceum Theatre, October 24, 1939.

THE ARRIVAL of the Chekhov Theatre Productions, Inc., is a Broadway event of importance. It is "a professional producing outgrowth" of the Chekhov Theatre Studio of Ridgefield, Connecticut, a project started three years ago at Dartington Hall in Devon, England, and last winter transferred to this country because of war conditions that made work and planning difficult and uncertain. The organization is under the direction of Mr. Michael Chekhov, nephew of the dramatist and co-founder (1911) of the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre and founder (1923) of the Second Moscow Art Theatre. He has, furthermore, been a director and an actor of international experience and distinction.

That this first venture was not very successful a glance at the reviews next day, for the most part caustic, or worse, will show all too clearly. On the whole I must agree, but not without recording some of the theatrical virtues that are highly important and that were, moreover, present to an unusual degree in this production.

There is a remarkable unity among the players. They are all filled with the spirit of some single purpose and understanding; they play with regard to the scene's effect and the weight of some total impression to be gained in it; they are never assertive one at the expense of another, never greedy as individuals, never straining out of the frame with the familiar actor exhibitionism. Through this fact a general purity of approach and intention arises; the purpose never seems false; the devotion seems complete and beautiful.

The bodily movement of the player, whether we like the design he creates or not, has been seen to. You would not find another company in our New York theatre that could show anything like so much ability to take any attitude, flow of line, variety of gesture and facial mask. Out of this comes a sense of stability and confidence, both in their figures and in the relation of figures to each other.

The diction of the company is above the stage average. In general the make-ups for this particular play are realistic, marked with a tendency, where a certain quick projection is needed, toward stylization. One of the weakest spots in our stage is make-up; and in this respect the new company—with the exception of the philosophic Stranger saint's wig, Scene XIV—has a uniform excellence that is a noble reproach and a good lesson.

The settings for "The Possessed" are easily the most interesting to be seen on Broadway at the moment. The fifteen scenes called for are accomplished with screens, furnishings, compositions, steps and levels, corners of rooms and so on, each one a unit set up against a backdrop on which light and the deep imagination of its uses bring suggestions of one place after another, one mood and another. We have dramatic statements that are almost realistic, with architectural details or whatever is required, and also the music of abstract patterns, profound revelations in color values or in movement through light and dark. Some of the scene units that are set up are very fine, like that, for instance, for the room of Shatov and Kirilov, Scene III, in which not only the screen itself but the brush and vivid staccato in the painting of it seem to me remarkable. In a few of these designs I thought the décor intruded on the spiritual content and pressure of the scene itself. This happens, for instance, in Scene II, the drawing-room of Stavrogin's house, or in that more or less abstract setting of steps, railings, elevations and squares that serves the final scene of the play, where the revolutionary destroyer, pistol in hand, his eyes looking into the other's, is paralyzed out of his plan to kill Stavrogin by the new calm and certainty he sees there.

The lighting of the scenes is also at times intrusive, almost obstructive, but more often than not is wonderfully felt out, varied and full of beauty and drama. The costumes are admirable, carried through to an unusual extent with respect to the detailed design and the making. And, what is even rarer on our stage, they are worn well.

This décor for "The Possessed" is by Mr. Mstislav Dobujinsky, whose designs in the old days for the Moscow Art Theatre, Diaghilev, Pavlova, and various theatres and opera houses over the Continent and in London, were well known. In New York we have seen him through the sketches he made for the greatly admired settings of the Theatre Guild production of "A Month in the Country" and in his designs for Baliev's "Chauve-Souris."

Certain defects in the occasion were apparently fatal.

In the first place, it seems to me, the choice of the play that should introduce to us the Chekhov Theatre Productions, Inc., was unfortunate. The theme, the mood, the race, the types, the geography of this play are not ours. Even with regard to time the Dostoevsky material is three or four generations back. Whatever some of the phrases may in Russian mean to Russian audiences—phrases like "God-Man," "Future of Society," et cetera—they seem to us clichés, with small power in them, with the tinge of familiar oratory upon them, or with a certain wash-out of fatuous repetition taking away what color or persuasion they may once have had. We get fifteen short, and as to method perhaps expressionistic, scenes, dealing with human material whose profundity and significance and emotional impact we are to take as ultimate—or shall we say, as Dostoevsky, in the great sense of him. We are asked, by the time the first ten words of a scene have been spoken, to feel the power or fire or desolation of something very little prepared for if at all; and without first knowing very much about the person, we are launched into supposed cataclysms of personality, and are confronted by actions and events that we do pretty well to catch on to, much less be shattered by or find ominous and prophetic. Perhaps in the Russian theatre, for a spectator who knows Dostoevsky's works by heart, and with actors of tremendous power, art and projection, these brief scenes might come off with all their vast intention; but for my part I have never in the theatres of divers nations seen actors who would be up to it.

It could be said too that there is a certain regrettable and often monotonous intensity, often combined with a speed too slow for English, in the actors' speaking of their lines that hurts the general effect. And what is more, if we are to have this intensification of delivery, it should be carried throughout the words themselves, projecting, in such words as "national," "advantage," "business," for exam-

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ple, into the nasals, liquids, and so on, the same general intensity that the line as a whole receives—otherwise we have, so far as the language is concerned, something extraneous and false and in effect superimposed.

STARK YOUNG

The Bandwagon

I have discussed the European situation with Foreign Minister Georges Bonnet of France and Foreign Secretary Viscount Halifax of Britain, and on Monday I had a conference with Herr von Ribbentrop. I had intended to discuss the refugee question with him, but I took M. Bonnet's advice not to mention it. The European situation is so tense that this might irritate Germany. – *From an interview with Hamilton Fish, quoted in The New York Times.*

H. W. Prentis Jr., president of the Armstrong Cork Company, urged local associations to collect comparative data on local employment and relief to combat loose charges that industry is responsible for employment. – *From The New York Times.*

The More Abundant Life

"I was a girl in a BUND LOVE CAMP." She joined a Bund Girls' Club because she yearned for friendship. But not for the kind of "friendship" she found. Desperately she tried to reach her mother. A uniformed guard blocked her from the phone. And suddenly she realized—this was a love camp and she was a prisoner!. . . . READ YOUR OWN LIFE STORY IN TRUE STORY MAGAZINE. Read "I Had to Marry Him," read "Sex Exchange," read "What Would You Do About the Other Woman?" read "I Bought Her Love." – *From a five-column, eleven-inch ad in The New York Daily Mirror.*

A Child's Garden of Curses

Growing pessimism and "infantilism" are threatening the democratic process, Eduard C. Lindeman, president of the Institute of Propaganda Analysis, said here yesterday.

He said that infantilism, offering a convenient escape from facing the problems of the world in an adult manner, expressed itself in literature by extreme bitterness, such as "Grapes of Wrath" and "Christ in Concrete." – *News item in The Washington Post.*

Have You Left an "e" Out Anywhere?

Mystic Charm of Blackouts Grips Citizens of Britain. – *Headline in The Chicago Daily News.*

Only-Man-Is-Vile Department

Nobility: . . . See also FASHION, GREATNESS, IMPORTANCE, MASTER, PROBITY, REPUTE, VIRTUE—Antonyms: see PEOPLE. – *From Roget's Thesaurus.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Answer Wanted

SIR: From various articles in The New York Times I have got the same impression as yours: "For two months or more things have been going badly for the Japs in China."

But why have Jap bonds on the New York market been climbing slowly most all that time? Not that I consider stock prices, etc., as having much meaning—but someone must be buying these bonds; can it be Henry Ford?

Springfield, Me. HARRISON W. SMITH

Ray Becker's Twenty Years

SIR: The final chapter in one of the most notorious cases of anti-labor violence and persecution was written in Portland on September 28 at a banquet given by the CIO woodworkers in honor of its last victim, Ray Becker, who received his freedom six days earlier after serving twenty years in the Washington state penitentiary for a crime he did not commit. Not so well known as the Sacco and Vanzetti affair or the Mooney-Billings case, the Centralia outrage of Armistice Day, 1919, rivals both in terror, viciousness and mob hysteria. In it one member of the legendary IWW loggers, Wesley Everest, was horribly tortured, mutilated and lynched, and eight of his comrades, including Ray Becker, received sentences of twenty to forty-five years for the crime of defending their union hall against an employer-inspired attack by legionnaires and business men. Becker, who steadfastly refused to admit his guilt by accepting a parole, had his sentence commuted only after the action of Governor Olson of California in pardoning Tom Mooney created public pressure on Washington's reactionary Governor Clarence D. Martin. The last stand of the Wobblies in the Northwest, the Centralia affair permanently broke their power and crippled militant labor unionism in Oregon and Washington for nearly two decades.

Becker and the others were convicted, at a trial resembling a drumhead court-martial, of the murder of four legionnaires who participated in the unprovoked attack. The defendants have long since been exonerated of any crime other than the fact that they were the most active members of the union. Six of the jurors who voted for conviction at the trial have since declared that they would have voted for acquittal had they not been afraid for their own lives and those of the Wobblies had they been freed.

Salem, Ore. JOHN VOSS

Housing—Is It Art?

SIR: Sometimes I feel that The New Republic's editors, Mr. Bliven, Mr. Mumford and Mr. Flynn, have several drops of banker blood in their veins. Their attitude toward housing provides the acid test. Never does it seem to occur to these non-technically minded gentlemen that shelter is a problem having other than humanitarian and literary aspects. Never is there any suggestion in the pages of The New Republic that to subsidize handicraft types of shelter that grew out of land-speculation to

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cost three times what average income can amortize is like subsidizing street cars in a day of motor vehicles. Never is any chance lost to drum in the ridiculous idea that Uncle Sam should "invest" heavily in slum clearance in areas where already investment per family in land, structure and utilities is above $12,000 per family. Never is account taken of the fact that average family income in America hugs the $1,000 level, in spite of which a majority of Americans wish to taste the illusion at least of owning their own home. Never is the least sympathy shown with the attempts of technicians to meet these issues so that the majority of Americans now enjoying less than average income may house themselves adequately in houses costing to build not more than one and a half to two times average annual family income.

Boats occasionally need to shed their barnacles. Tied up in one place perpetually, they get rusty, old and proud of their anchorage. Several of the writers for The New Republic have got themselves into this condition. Their intentions are of the best. Their emotions are splendid. Their style is impeccable. But they still are too correctly in the traditions of a pre-industrial era now gone with the wind. Last night I went through the past six months of your periodical picking out passage after passage relating to investment, housing, building construction, etc., that simply are funny to anyone like myself who has spent thirty years either building or thinking about the problems involved. I may be wrong. But at least there is a chance that you may be.

Flint, Mich. CORWIN WILLSON

But Will St. Helena Take Him?

SIR: If Hitler is as much concerned about the peace of Europe as he says he is, why does he not book passage for St. Helena at once? The British might be glad to provide him transportation and convoy. The possibilities for a painter on St. Helena have never been exploited.

Oklahoma City, Okla. C. F. DE GARIS

Peace Is Exciting, Too

SIR: I am dismayed by the attitude which The New Republic has taken towards the current European war. Apparently you are going to espouse an "every-aid-short-of-war" policy toward the Allies. In other words, the United States will take part in and further this war, but avoid all of the downright dirty work. You have for years—with other intelligent people—agreed that war settles nothing. And yet now you are willing to have us play a part in this obvious error.

I dislike Nazis, and I believe you dislike them, because of what they have done in Germany to German living, and to the German arts and sciences. This war, however, is being fought, not for what the Nazis have done in Germany, but for what they are trying to do in respect to conquest in extra-German lands. In other words, this war is just one more European war over land and power. We do not have to fight in this war; we can devote ourselves to the truly exciting problems of peaceful living.

Chicago, Ill. RICHARD SCHLEGEL JR.

Calling the Good Samaritan

SIR: The American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born has recently launched a campaign for funds in support of its work. The campaign is led by Professor John Dewey and Bishop Francis J. McConnell and is sponsored by Robert Morss Lovett, Oswald Garrison Villard, George S. Counts, Harry Elmer Barnes and others.

The American Committee is fighting vigorously the anti-alien legislation now pending in Congress, counteracting anti-foreign-born propaganda, protecting American families from destruction by process of deportation, facilitating naturalization of foreign born, maintaining American traditions of right of asylum and promoting better understanding between native and foreign born. This work challenges the support of us all. The Committee's address is 79 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

New York City JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

The Very Same

SIR: Mr. Waldo Frank, and others among you, have probably pointed out that the ship "Orizaba," mentioned by Mr. Kates in your issue of October 18 ["Seamen and Survivors"] has figured in your columns before. I refer to Mr. Frank's article of February 15, 1933, which mentions Hart Crane's suicide in the Gulf of Mexico by leaping from the stern of a ship "Orizaba." Same "Orizaba"?

Warren, Me. EDGAR A. COMEE

From The New Republic Mail Bag

The mail advising on the European situation and what should be done to it has been so heavy that we aren't talking, just yet. The consensus is that we don't know anything about anything. But now and then the letters express a different idea. Charles L. Rosenthal (Yale '42) says we ought either to reprint Charles Beard's series of New Republic articles later published as "The Devil Theory of War" or compel our readers to read them once again for luck. "Strangely enough," Mr. Rosenthal says, "Mr. Beard sums up all the possible arguments against repeal [of the embargo] and even goes further by suggesting complete embargo." And Richard H. Rovere (writing from Brooklyn) confesses that he thought us very silly before the war broke out. Now he believes we must have been right then, but have changed and are therefore still silly. "The New Republic has been smart for years. Why doesn't it call this war what it is, a tussle for loot among the world's handiest crooks?"

We have two more letters about the habits of our John T. Flynn. One (from Caroline T. Monks, of Brookline, Massachusetts) says that without benefit of having read Raymond Moley's "After Seven Years," she has found its author's general stand on things pretty small potatoes. Another, from Blanche Watson of New York City, wants to thank Mr. Flynn for a reviewer's estimate with which "the man on the street . . . may not agree. Probably it will be this man in the street, and not John T. Flynn, who before very long will be obliged to change his mind." We can assure loyal correspondents that there is no "probably" about it. John T. Flynn doesn't change his mind.

Edward T. Friendly wants our readers to be told that it is so hard to get publications in English where he is that if they have any pity they will send used magazines to him at San Cosme 8, Mexico City, D. F. . . . H. J. Evje asks for help in completing a study he is making of conditions among the low-income groups of this country. Readers having knowledge of studies under way or completed "of malnutrition and starvation parallel to food destruction" in the last ten years are invited to write Mr. Evje, 623 Parkwood Street, N. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. . . . Albert Fergenson, of Detroit, answers the question put by Edmund Wilson in a review of the Nonesuch Dickens (October 4). The original ending of "Great Expectations" is possible to find, he says. It was used by Limited Editions "or one of the other publishers of arty volumes" some two years ago.

Wadsworth Mulrooney writes from the Orkney Islands to tell us how well the average Briton is provided with the latest styles. Among such ads appearing on the front page of The Manchester Guardian as "Refined person as single-handed cook" and "An experienced General wanted, no washing or cooking," are found brisk sales talks for "Sand for sandbagging—filled sandbags delivered and stacked," "'Antigasphalt'—asphalt as protection against poison gas and incendiary bombs," and the attractive safety of Isle of Man real estate.

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Problems of Language

FOR US ALL TODAY, psychologists, logicians, philosophers," says Professor Britton in his preface, "problems of language are central." Since the early years of this century, when Lady Welby's "What Is Meaning?" and Allen Upward's "The New Word" were published, there has been a steadily increasing literature on symbolism. Ever since Ogden and Richards' "The Meaning of Meaning," and more especially since Stuart Chase's "The Tyranny of Words," the importance of problems of language has become increasingly apparent, not only to professional intellectuals but to general readers. It is to be regretted that Professor Britton's book,[1] or one like it, was not available to Mr. Chase a couple of years ago—he could have avoided some of his more serious overstatements and errors. "Communication" starts with Ogden and Richards' basic division of the uses of language into the informative (symbolic) and the emotive (dynamic), examines in turn the various kinds of propositions, contingent and necessary, upon which science is based, and finally proceeds (as Mr. Chase should have done) to the semantic analysis of poetry.

Professor Britton's views on language are essentially empirical and behavioristic. "Informative language . . . is about what we may experience." Scientific conclusions rest not upon the "true record" of other people's experience, but upon "reports uttered or written by people under certain conditions." The meaning of a term is known when the conditions under which it may be used are known. He recommends logical analysis as remedial—many "metaphysical" problems, that is to say, "disappear" when the facts of language are revealed. Pseudo-problems must be got out of the way before informative language attains its full efficiency. All these are, of course, generally accepted conclusions.

The very important because little understood fact that "necessary propositions" of logic (as of much of ethics and esthetics) are statements not about the structure of reality but *about language*, is expertly demonstrated. Such propositions can usually be shown to be tautologies. But that does not mean that they are meaningless; they are "Rules of Language," and have informative value in that they describe how words are used. But in addition to giving this information, they state how words *ought* to be used—the "ought" being dictated not by the "nature of things," but by practical considerations, no less compulsive for their pragmatic character. This regulative power of necessary propositions is due to the fact that they are, in addition to being informative, *dynamic* ("emotive"). "Besides conveying information about [linguistic] customs actually prevailing amongst a certain group of people, we are trying [in necessary propositions] to command or persuade our audience to follow that custom and not to use words in any other way." This dynamic use of language (also called by others "the pragmatic component of meaning") has been ignored or neglected by some of the logical positivists, as well as by Stuart Chase. Its recognition is essential (as Eliseo Vivas explains in a recent issue of The Kenyon Review) not only for theoretical reasons, but for practical ones. Professor Britton's demonstration of this double function of necessary propositions is, therefore, as timely as it is important.

The most interesting part of the volume, however, is his examination of poetry—the analysis, that is, of the dynamic uses of language at work. His restatement of William Empson's views can hardly be improved upon—and it was high time someone correlated Empson's findings with those of the logicians: "How do the words of poetry affect our emotions? They do so as *pure sound*; the sound serves to enhance the emotional effect of the *sign*. They do so by means of their ordinary conventional meanings; those meanings are in their turn signs for feelings. They do so, not by communicating to us any consistent set of possible facts, but by control of the emotions themselves; hence the freedom of poetry from the logic of informative propositions."

This statement of the "meanings" of poetry leads to a consideration of the "truth" of imaginative writings. The most common error, says the author, is the confusion of poetic statements ostensibly about the world but actually about the poet's feelings (*e. g.*, "Life is beautiful"), with informative propositions about the nature of the world. The Truth of poetry is not the Truth of informative propositions, but is instead a set of "more or less permanent modifications of our feelings towards particular people, things, events, or towards life in general"—that is, if a poetical statement is "true," it changes our *attitudes* from the less to the more *useful*.

The assessment of the total value of a work of art, then, involves first the pleasure it may give as an immediate experience, apart from the ends it may serve. Second, if, through the indirect methods peculiar to art (fable, fantasy, etc.) the artist, in his role as scientist, makes any informative propositions about the world, their truth must be checked by means of an examination of the actual world. Finally, it is necessary to ask how useful, in a world as it is, are the attitudes the artist (now in his role as moralist) evokes. "Art remains great so long as it is useful. . . . When art seems to have absolute value, then this must really be understood as value for the present, or value for any predictable future."

It is to be regretted that Professor Britton's synthesis of so much of the best thought on problems of meaning is so cautious and uninspiring. It is an important feature of semantics that few who think about it fail to see that ultimately it must affect everybody, for an enlightened public opinion can be achieved only when the average citizen is, at least to some degree, a semanticist. Such fundamental errors as that of mistaking a dynamic use of language for an informative (that is, regarding the statement, "Amlie is a communist," as a statement about Amlie instead of as clinical evidence of the state of mind of the speaker) are not difficult to deal with—merely telling most people that such errors can be made goes a long way. The knowledge on the part of Ogden and Richards that such semantic information can ultimately be made widely communicable (even if they did not communicate it particularly well) gave them a fervor such as is carefully excluded from Professor Britton's work. As for the implications of semantics to all branches of thought, sociology, law, ethics, education, psychiatry, child training, and even to the future of civiliza-

[1] Communication: A Philosophical Study of Language, by Karl Britton. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 306 pages. $3.75.

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tion, such as are dealt with without regard to academic caution by Count Alfred Korzybski in his "Science and Sanity"—these are not even intimated. The omission of a discussion of Korzybski's views in a book of this sort is serious, since it makes it hard to avoid the conclusion that the author is either unaware of or indifferent to the numerous practical and social implications of his subject.

S. I. HAYAKAWA

Books in Review

The Pen Is Mightier

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW how you came to hold those odd, inaccurate notions about America and the First World War and understand how you were led to believe that the end of the war would usher in Utopia, get a copy of "Words That Won the War"[1] by Mock and Larson. It tells in a fascinating fashion the story of the Creel Committee on Public Information. This outfit laid down the propaganda barrage that brought Americans as close to unanimity of opinion as they are ever likely to come—short of another war—and carried the Wilsonian "message" to the four corners of the earth. It is an amazing and wonderful story, here for the first time told in detail, for the authors had access to the Creel Committee papers in the National Archives.

On April 13, 1917, President Wilson signed an executive order creating a Committee on Public Information consisting of George Creel, Chairman and Director; Robert Lansing, Secretary of State; Newton Baker, Secretary of War; and Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy. It was Creel's job to improvise what today we call a propaganda ministry. Improvise is the word. To the annoyance of lovers of blueprints, Messrs. Mock and Larson could not reconstruct the Committee's organization, but little else escapes their attention. Every kind of propaganda Creel used is examined intensively; every country in which his men ventured—associated, neutral or enemy—is named, its case examined, and in many instances the activities there are detailed; the difficulties as well as the facile successes are pointed out. In many instances the difficulties were created by the Allies.

The negative legal controls of opinion in America, shocking though their operation was, were less important to Creel and his associates than positive propaganda. The authors nevertheless emphasize that real censorship came in this country almost unnoticed—even the newspapers missed the story, though they fought the initial efforts—and they show how censorship was intensified as hysteria rose. They point to the enormous powers concealed in the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917, the Trading-with-the Enemy Act of October 6, 1917, and the Sedition Act of May 16, 1916, and quote Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes as declaring:

> When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight, and that no court could regard them as protected by any constitutional rights.

[1] Words That Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919, by James R. Mock and Cedric Larson. Princeton University Press. 388 pages. $3.75.

Creel fell back back on these laws, but his activities chiefly took the form of official news releases spread over the United States and the world, of hundreds of feature stories with good "by-lines," of millions of official pamphlets, of millions of words spoken by Four Minute Men at public gatherings, of moving pictures, of "stills," and of bribery of press men abroad when all else failed. Such activities were easy enough at home, but abroad there was a sharp struggle to control neutral opinion; there was an intense and finally unpopular effort to get Wilson's views a wide hearing in Allied countries; there was an exciting and futile effort to "moderate" the Russian Revolution; and there was the first effort to repaint Uncle Sam in attractive colors for the benefit of Latin America. It is fascinating merely to note the names of those who played parts, small or large, in this tremendous organization: George Creel, Will Irwin, Charles E. Merriam, Carl Byoir, Edward L. Bernays, Roger Babson, Fiorello La-Guardia, Charles Dana Gibson, Charles Merz, Walter Lippmann, Hendrik van Loon, Charles Beard, George Seldes, Samuel Gompers, Seward Collins, Booth Tarkington, Hugh Gibson, Ernest Poole, Frederick Jackson Turner, William E. Dodd and literally hundreds of others. Of the scholars who were appealed to for aid, it is stated that "there was never a refusal." It was the most astonishing mobilization of "publicity talent" ever made in this nation.

And to what sum does the story add up? The authors don't attempt to say, but they are at some pains to record that the boys began to be disillusioned as the war drew to a close. Those who were operating in the Allied countries especially, and some of those in neutral territory, detected a strong anti-American bias in the propaganda of the Allies as 1918 wore on. They began to see that the Allies—Britain for one—had lured the United States into the war simply to use its material power. The peace program of Wilson was feared and hated. These suspicions are reported home by the operatives abroad and the reports are quoted in this book. The book, indeed, like so many others dealing with the time, underlines the truth of the generalization that it was not the going to Europe and engaging in the fighting that disillusioned this country; it was rather the failure of the effort to win any decent peace after the fighting was over.

Nothing in this book is so disquieting as the final chapter in which the authors outline the official plans for doing the job all over again if and when America goes to war once more. Let's hope that when the story of the next effort is written it will include a long list of those who refused to coöperate with the George Creel of tomorrow.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

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Lester F. Ward

Lester F. Ward: The American Aristotle, by Samuel Chugerman. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press. 591 pages. $5.

EVERYONE interested in American intellectual life, in the history of ideas, and their influence in our civilization, will be grateful for Mr. Chugerman's book on Lester F. Ward. It is both biographical and analytical. It devotes seventy-seven pages to Ward's life and achievements and four hundred and eighty-one pages to his scientific and sociological conceptions, ranging from biology through psychology and economics to ethics. Our author has apparently examined with care all of Ward's writings which he could unearth by years of painstaking research.

The story of Ward is an American epic. He was born in 1841. He was the son of Justus Ward, an itinerant mechanic, and Silence Ward, the daughter of a clergyman, "a refined and scholarly woman who had a flair for literature," which ten children could not take away from her. He was a brother of C. O. Ward, the author of two amazing works, now almost forgotten by the wise and good: "A Labor Catechism of Political Economy" and "The Ancient Lowly: A History of the Working People." Amid the hardships and labors of a poverty-haunted youth, Lester Ward managed to educate himself in the elements of learning. After serving in the Union Army and sustaining severe wounds at the front, Ward got a clerkship in the government at Washington and spent about forty years in that city. There he studied in his spare time at Columbian University, and took degrees in arts and laws and won a diploma in medicine. He acquired a working knowledge of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, German, French (which he spoke and wrote fluently), Italian, Spanish, Russian, Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese. Incidentally he became distinguished for his work in botany, geology and paleontology. In both learning and practical knowledge of science and life, he was so superior to Herbert Spencer and most of his contemporaries that they must be placed entirely out of his class.

By working from dawn until late at night, Ward covered natural science and sociology with a thoroughness attained by few if any of his contemporaries. For fourteen years he toiled at his "Dynamic Sociology," published in 1883—the very title carrying its own significance. This was followed in 1893 by his "Psychic Factors of Civilization," and by other papers, essays and volumes, enough to fill a long shelf. At the age of sixty-five Ward was called to Brown University, where he taught sociology until 1913. I have always regarded it as among my great good fortunes to have read "Psychic Factors" about 1896 and to have met this remarkable man in the later years of his life. At the age of nearly seventy, Ward impressed me as a monolith of living granite.

It is impossible to sum up in a brief review the thought and influence of this amazing personality. His learning was vast, his interests truly cosmic, and his impacts upon American thought wide-reaching. He was the first, and perhaps the only, American to bring such a huge battery of knowledge and experience in peace and war to bear upon the problems raised by Comte and Herbert Spencer. If his principal achievement were to be summarized very briefly, it might be put in this fashion: Ward blasted to pieces the naïve Manchesterism which Spencer mistook for the ultimate design of the universe, restored the data of humanism to sociology, recognized the role of woman in civilization, riddled the hollow pretensions of the "economics" represented by J. Laurence Laughlin's falsified edition of John Stuart Mill's "Political Economy," and made a mighty plea for humanity. Despite his vagaries (common to all human beings), Ward was high among the giants of his time, and we are fortunate in having this record of his life and work. If Mr. Chugerman had been more critical, more attentive to the writings of Ward's contemporaries, and less adulatory, his case for Ward would have been more powerful than it is.

CHARLES A. BEARD

Peasant and Pacifist

Jean Clarambaux, by Jean Tousseul. Translated by Elisabeth Abbot. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company. $3.

IN SPITE OF HIS WINNING various high European literary honors, and now being considered a likely candidate for the Nobel Prize, very little is known in this country about the Belgian novelist and pacifist Oliver Degée, who writes under the pseudonym of Jean Tousseul. "Tousseul" may be translated as "the lonely one." The pseudonym is a confession, for like Giono of France and Lawrence of England, this Belgian writer's intellectual attitude is that of a helpless anarchy developing or degenerating into a sick disgust with society itself.

"Jean Clarambaux," published abroad in five volumes, is at once the story of a village and the biography of a peasant intellectual. Jean, the illegitimate son of a peasant girl, is born into a humble Walloon village situated somewhere at the juncture of Liège and Namur provinces, where the Belgian forts stood in 1914. The first book of the novel deals with Jean's childhood discovery of his village world. Here is the best of Tousseul's style, with its exquisite evocatory music and intimate moods. The second and third books, which trace Jean's adolescence and coming-of-age, are remarkable only on account of Tousseul's absolute indifference to the intellect, and his inability to communicate any but the most idyllic experiences. The fourth book is the longest and most interesting. It gives an amazingly beautiful and authentic picture of the German invasion and occupation of Belgium in 1914-18. None of the brutality of militarism is omitted, and yet it is characteristic of Tousseul's nostalgic style that it is all softened and rendered somehow merely sad.

The impact upon Jean Clarambaux's circumscribed mind of the war, and the revolution, defeat and peace which follow, form the concluding material. The entire vast novel marches toward the culminating question: how is the idyll of the village to be preserved in a world which cannot exist without war? Jean tries to answer it, although it is evident from the premise of his character that he cannot. Tousseul has confronted his peasant intellectual with a problem beyond the limitations of village comprehension. Jean, of course, gives the answer of the peasant: the answer of Piers Plowman, of Leo Tolstoy—a protest and an acqui-

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escence. Wars rise and subside like the natural storms which harass the villages, but the village and its folk endure. Like Giono and Lawrence, though without their bitterness or their power, Tousseul finds in a myth of earth and toilers in the earth, who persist past history, at once a criticism of society and an apology for his own social pessimism.

MICHAEL SAYERS

A Housekeeper in Business

A Woman's Place: The Autobiography of Hortense Odlum. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 286 pages. $2.75.

MRS. ODLUM is one of those rare women who turn up in department stores—women who, never having had a day's business experience in their lives, make good because or in spite of it. Her background consisted in years of running a household, at first in genteel poverty and later in something approaching riches. Mr. Odlum was rising in the world. With a group of associates, he came into control of a big Fifth Avenue store that was on the edge of bankruptcy. What to do with Bonwit Teller, they didn't know. When they asked Mrs. Odlum to ferret out what was wrong with the store from the shopper's point of view, she was at first bewildered. When the sensible suggestions she made were disregarded by the store executives, she was even more bewildered. The endless days she spent in looking and listening—during which she saw customers being shown what they did not want, saw that stock and sales force were inadequate, saw that merchandise was badly styled, saw that the store looked gloomy and shabby inside, saw customer after customer walk away and saw the demoralizing effect on the selling staff—all might have been wasted had she not had the good fortune to be made president of Bonwit Teller by her husband.

She began her job, not by adding false fronts, more departments and more confusion, but from the standpoint of common sense and practical housekeeping. Bonwit Teller's identity had been lost somewhere between Thirty-eighth Street and Fifty-sixth Street in the move uptown. And so an advertising campaign was launched to dramatize Mrs. Odlum and her unique position in relation to the store and to women shoppers. Almost overnight Bonwit Teller was given a living personality. There followed the business of communicating a sense of security to her employees, of selecting well styled merchandise based on definite functional uses, of establishing a more personal relationship between customer and management, of housecleaning and redecorating the store as if it were a private residence. In a way, her account of her activities and associates is a restatement of Bonwit Teller's sensible and dignified advertising campaigns.

On the personal side, Mrs. Odlum tells about her childhood in Utah and her struggles in New York as a young wife and mother, with all the pride of the person who has made good. She also makes many sage remarks on women's lives and problems and careers, which might as well have been omitted. Essentially the book is a study in good housekeeping, as applied to a big store.

MURIEL MAURER

Allegory for Dictators

Made in U.S.A., by Hans Otto Storm. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

IN 1937 HANS OTTO STORM published "Pity the Tyrant," the story of a sensitive American engineer in a South American background of poverty, tyranny and festering revolution. The critics called it delightful, vigorous and new; but the public did not buy. This was its theme: the reigning dictator has been jailed after a "little revolution"; incarcerated, he is the convenient scapegoat for the people, "in whose name they could vicariously atone for all their meanness, for their pride, their cowardice." Mr. Storm reworks that theme in his present novel, "Made in U.S.A.," with a directness, freshness and conviction that should recommend it to a much wider public. The tyrant in the first book is an undertone off-stage; here he comes to life as Captain Stoner of the worn-out steamer "India."

Stoner is a hard-headed seaman with a power complex. His instructions are explicit: to run the "India" until she sinks and the ship's owner collects the insurance. The steamer goes aground on an uncharted shoal, is stranded for three days and, although the rising tide threatens to tear her apart, the captain refuses to summon aid or to allow crew and passengers to abandon her. In the small world of the stranded boat, where no one becomes an admirable Crichton, the crew stages a comic-opera revolution against Stoner and his officers. A battle of fists, deck-chairs and coat-hangers exhausts the combatants who, with bales of hay from the cargo, establish a frontier running the beam of the ship. The passengers take sides, most of them staying with the captain. Under pressure, inhibitions are discarded: Miss Winship and Miss Teagle, school teachers, act up to expectations; a German *Hausfrau* volunteers her help in the galley; Dudley Hockabout, a timid landscape painter, throws his canvas overboard; and Mr. Grierson, navigator, calling the captain mad, switches over to the crew's side of the hay frontier.

When the tide comes in, the ship nearly breaks, the captain falls and cripples his leg, "and then everybody toiled with a oneness they would not have dreamed of." The "India" is driven safe to harbor, drydocked and repaired; later, without passengers, she runs against a coral reef and sinks. The insurance is collected.

Readers will admire Storm's ability to draw meaning from his drama without stopping the flow of action to insert footnotes. With sure control, he focuses a "big" story in 181 pages, and he needs no more space. All his characters are sharply chiseled; he may cut almost too clearly, for some of the minor figures seem to crowd upon the major; but he knows what he is doing. His style is taut, nervous and succinct, and he gets some remarkable effects. Thus, the landscape artist "went out and looked at the sea—a crisp sea now, and too conventional; he didn't like seas like that, they looked like an advertisement for Saltina Biscuits." The Chinese cook-boy drowns and is hauled back. "On the deck . . . lay the Chinaman. . . . He was bent into a half-circle like a dead shrimp."

The meaning of the novel is unavoidable. If the "India" is the ship of state, "Made in U.S.A." is an allegory for dictators.

MILTON G. LEHMAN

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Business Under Hitler

The Vampire Economy: Doing Business under Fascism, by Guenter Reimann. New York: The Vanguard Press. 368 pages. $3.

We know by now how the Nazis dealt with their political opponents, with organized labor, education, science, law and ethics. Their activities have been described by military experts, clergymen, artists, tourists and refugees. The reader's vocabulary is enriched by *Rassenschande*, *Blitzkrieg* and *Lebensraum*. But who has ever heard of the "contact man" in German business or understands the functioning of the "work community"? Relatively little light has been shed on the less spectacular, yet in the long run far more important, changes in Germany's economic set-up. What have the Nazis done to German capitalism? Where will they lead it?

In an absorbing study, Guenter Reimann, a German economist, contributes an answer to this vexed question by analyzing the role of the business man in the Third Reich. The picture he reveals—and supports by a wealth of information, including many confidential official documents—must look fantastic to the American business man for whom the book is primarily written.

The old type of industrialist and banker is doomed under fascism, Reimann shows. The function of the enterpriser depended on the sanctity of private property; on clear, unchallenged laws; on unhampered personal initiative and sole responsibility in his transactions. None of these prerequisites any longer exists in Germany (or in Italy, to whose institutions the author occasionally refers). There are two main motives, Reimann says, which determine the course of the fascist dictatorship: preparation for war and maintenance of the autocratic rule of the bureaucracy. Nothing else really matters. In their interest, the Nazis did not and will not shrink from any interference with private property. They have submitted German business to the strictest control of innumerable government and party agencies. All and every business activity is regimented by decrees, restrictions, warnings and suggestions—many of them contradicting each other or open to interpretation. No business man is able to keep track of the flood of paper emanating from the government supervisory, control and distribution boards. The result, needless to say, is a breakdown of business morale and a growing insecurity. A special staff of legal advisers and unproductive white-collar workers has to be engaged solely to cope with the bureaucratic requirements of business and to fulfill the exigencies of the Treasury and the Party. But even the best lawyer cannot protect the business man from the danger of getting caught in the cobwebs of red tape or from violating the written and unwritten code of national behavior. Neither will the business man's most scrupulous adherence to legal procedure help him in getting the necessary raw material and foreign exchange. He needs pull, influential connections; he must be on good terms with the higher-ups in the political and military hierarchy. He has to look for "protectors" and "contact men."

The protection racket which sprang up under these circumstances surpasses anything the old or new world ever experienced. Compared to its power, organization and corruption, the American underworld appears as primitive and outclassed as the technique of a safecracker is by that of the Bank for International Settlements. To get government orders or permission to import and export, to be allowed to hire skilled workers, to ensure himself against the chance that some party investigator might discover "irregularities" in his books, the business man pays through the nose. He pays not only in form of taxes, winter relief and other general and local contributions to the party chest. He also pays for the cost of the social demagogy the Nazis need to keep their following. "Leader" in his shop, he has to be popular with his "followers," has to take them on "Strength-Through-Joy" trips, to buy them drinks at official "beer evenings," to "embellish" their working places, to build them sport fields regardless of the fact that his undernourished followers, worn out by speed-up and a ten or twelve-hour shift, are unwilling and unable to make use of them. On top of it all, neither loyalty nor bribe can give the employer any assurance that he will be able to continue. The party officials with whom he has to deal have the power to destroy him if he refuses to play ball, but not the power to guarantee his economic existence. The racketeers cannot even deliver protection.

German business is at the mercy of the Frankenstein's monster it helped to create. Reimann sees the Nazis destroying the old forms of capitalism without creating a new social order. The more precarious the economic situation, the greater the necessity for political pressure and repression, the better will the bureaucracy thrive. War will only hasten the process of liquidation of the "conservative" forces in Germany, of "all those who still own private property and who are not closely related to the supreme leadership." If Reimann should prove to be correct, Britain's war aim—the replacement of unruly Hitlerism by some more coöperative brand of fascism—has hardly any chance of success.

KARL BILLINGER

A Reader's List

BRYCE'S "AMERICAN COMMONWEALTH": FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, edited by R. C. Brooks (Macmillan, $2.50). A group of American scholars, including the president of the American Political Science Association and three past presidents, reëxamine from the vantage point of a half-century the Bryce classic that has sold 212,288 copies. Verdict: that Bryce needs revision on details and correction on minor emphases, but on the whole has built enduringly. Which may shed light not only on Bryce's stature, but also on the absence among present-day authors of the daring that produces great syntheses.

WIDER HORIZONS OF AMERICAN HISTORY, by Herbert E. Bolton (Appleton-Century, $1.50). Readable and scholarly essays about the importance of the whole western hemisphere as a background for the history of any American nation.

MAN MAKES HIMSELF, by V. Gordon Childe (Oxford, $2.50). An archeologist, writing for laymen, vindicates the idea of progress by applying the economic interpretation to natural history, pre-history and ancient history.

CAPTAIN ABBY AND CAPTAIN JOHN, by Robert P. Tristram Coffin (Macmillan, $2.50). The voyages, from 1859 to 1878, of two Down-Easters, Captain John and Abby Reed Pennell, whose "home was every part of the sea."

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THE YOUNGEST CAMEL, by Kay Boyle (Little, Brown, $2). A story for children: the adventures of a foolish baby camel and how he found Wisdom. Rather nice illustrations by Fritz Kredel. Well conceived and written, but the verdict is up to the kiddies. (This one votes for King Brady.)

Fiction

THE WITCH IN THE WOOD, by T. H. White (Putnam's, $2.50). This novel follows "The Sword in the Stone" in Mr. White's New Malory, and loses something in the usual way of the sequel. Arthur is now fitting England out for chivalry, and the main part of the story goes to Queen Morgause and her peculiar guests. Same delights of humor and strange information. If you read the first, read this too. If you didn't, read both.

KITTY FOYLE, by Christopher Morley (Lippincott, $2.50). A nice girl, Kitty, with a wonderful souse for a father, a rotogravure-section gentleman for a lover, and enough handy wit for almost anything: a swell girl, in fact. She provides a lively, knowing commentary on the-girl-behind-the-desk in the 1930's.

MICHAEL BEAM, by Richard Matthews Hallet (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50). America's childhood again, this time with a settler who must choose between his white wife and Indian mistress. Eventually the forest, the Red Man's magic and federal troops choose for him. Better-than-usual details here, and some colorful folk under the war paint.

A Correction

In our issue of October 25, through a slip of the pen, Mr. Isador Lubin was referred to as an official of the Commerce Department. He is of course head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Department of Labor.

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